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COMPUTER +VIDEO GAMES



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EXCLUSIVE KARNOV MAP. EXPERIENCE THE GORE ZONE

REVIEWED: JINKS, KARNOV, CARRIER COMMAND, TARGET RENEGADE

FREE BARBARIAN II POSTER

Beyond the Ice Palace and to the North, legend tells of a mystical land where strange creatures dwell. It is a land of fantasy and magic, of goblins and ghosts, of good and evil.

Recently, there has been great upset in the balance of good and evil in these lands. The forces of evil have been burning down the forests, destroying the homes and lives of the simple woodcutters.

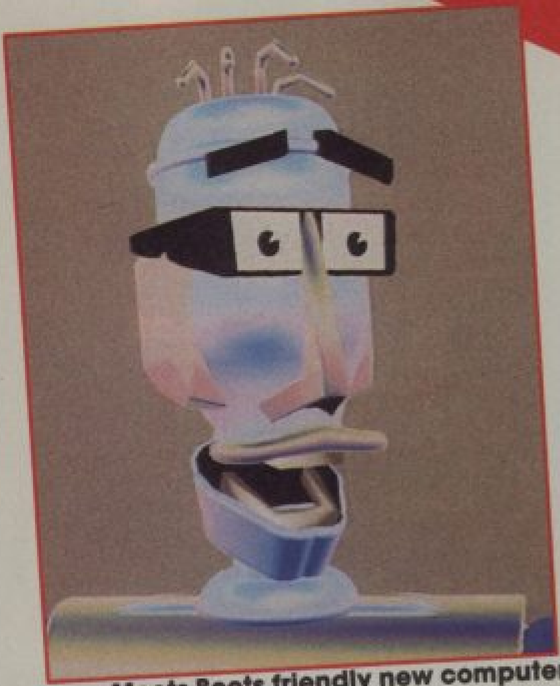
One night, a meeting was held between the ancient and wise spirits of the woods. A decision was made to appoint a single person to be responsible for returning the balance to the lands once again by banishing the evil back from where it came. They blessed a sacred arrow with the powers of the woods, which would summon a spirit in times of need, and shot it into the air; whoever found the arrow would find themselves in an adventure of fantastic importance . . .





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Contents



Meets Boots friendly new computer games sales droid. P 98.



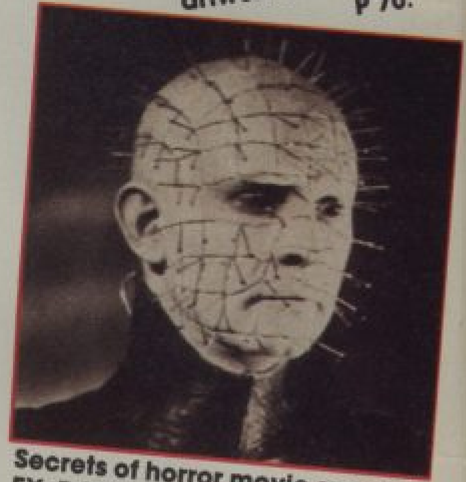
Jane strips for action in Big Screen. P 87.



Buggy boy — driving fun California style. P21.



Obliterator — more fabulous artwork from Psygnosis P 70.



Secrets of horror movie special FX. P 92.



Karnov brings glasnost to games. P 57

Editor: Eugene Lacey, Deputy Editor: Paul Boughton. Sub Editor: Seamus St. John. Staff Writer: Matt Bielby. Art Editor: Craig Kennedy. Advertisement Manager: Garry Williams. Sales Executive: S

Don't miss...

It's a rip, it's a roar, with *C&VG* you get more. Have you clocked the fabulously free *C&VG Barbarian II* poster? Great, isn't it? In this month's hard-driving, rubber burning issue we exclusively preview *Roadblasters*, US Gold's next biggie and give you the chance to win an Atari ST and real leather flying jackets. We also hope to turn your stomach with a visit into the Gore Zone with a look at horror film special effects and thrill you with the latest news, reviews and previews . . . And don't miss out on your new Out To Lunch feature. Okay, start reading . . . NOW!



ulous
nosis



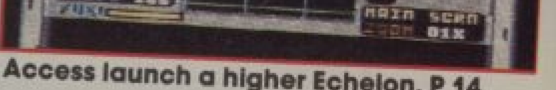
The cast of Return to Genesis. P69.



Target Renegade – the beat 'em up fans beat 'em up. P 27.



Roadblasters P 24.



Access launch a higher Echelon. P 14.



es. P 57.



Carrier Command wins a *C+VG* Hit. P 58.



Do you have the guts to play Gutz? P18.

ive: Si an Jones. Advertisement Production: Lora Clark. Publisher: Terry Pratt. Editorial and Advertisement Offices: Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AD. Tel: 01-251 6222.

THE NEW SINCLAIR HAS ONE BIG DISK-



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News

Drax Fax!

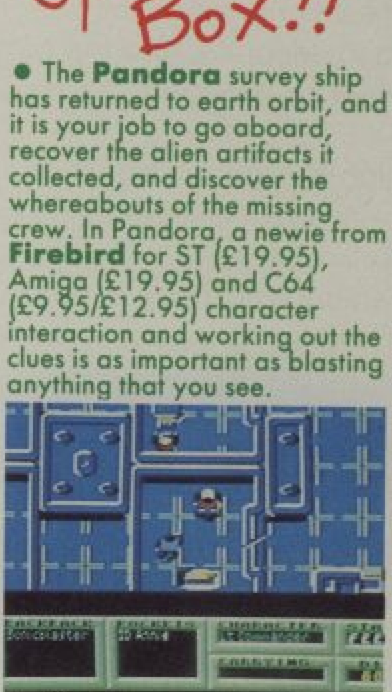
● By now the brilliant *C+VG*/Palace **Barbarian II: The Dungeons of Drax** posters probably has pride of place on your wall.

The way it was produced involved some neat special effects tricks which we'll be telling you about next month. And another thing, if you thought **Barbarian – the Ultimate Warrior** was a superb game, you ain't seen nothing yet. Barbarian II promises to kill it dead.

So make a date. *C+VG* next month. Return of the Barbarian.

Open the Box.!!

● The **Pandora** survey ship has returned to earth orbit, and it is your job to go aboard, recover the alien artifacts it collected, and discover the whereabouts of the missing crew. In Pandora, a newie from **Firebird** for ST (£19.95), Amiga (£19.95) and C64 (£9.95/£12.95) character interaction and working out the clues is as important as blasting anything that you see.



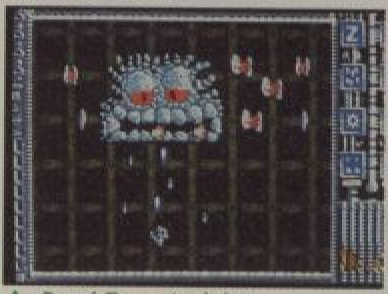
▲ *Alien encounters with* Pandora.

Game of LIFE

● **The Museum of Mankind** in London has a interactive video games system as part of an exhibition called **Living Arctic.** It's hoped that the system will help visitors get the fell of what life is like in the frozen north.

Controlled computer and based on a videodisc, the games are displayed on a television set with a touch-sensitive screen. Players touch images on the screen to progress through the games.

You can play the role of a northern hunter. With few opportunities for employment, food for the family is found by hunting. Clips from video films have you venturing out on the snow after caribou and trapping mink in the forests. Succeed, and you will gain praise from the tribe's elder. Fail by killing too many animals or the wrong kind and shame will be heaped upon you.



▲ *Brad Zoom's debut.*

Watching the Alien

● **Better Dead Than Alien** – a great title, eh? – is set for a May release on the Atari ST and Amiga from a new name on the games scene, **Electra.**

It's a space zapper featuring hero Brad Zoom's quest to save civilisation. The game promises 25 levels aliens, missiles meteor showers.

On patrol.

● **PHM Pegasus** is set for release on the IBM and PC compatibles from **Electronic Arts** in June, price £24.95.

Blade cuts it?

● **Joe Blade** is back. **Interceptor's** one-man war machine hero is back in the ever so imaginatively titled **Joe Blade 2.** The year is 1995 and the setting London. Punks and muggers roam the streets. Decent folk are held captive in their own homes. Joe arrives to clean up the streets. Our screen shots – taken from the Spectrum version – show street scenes. If you want to give it a go, Joe, JB 2 will cost £1.99 and will be released "soon." Meanwhile, Interceptor releases the sequel to **Fungus.** And guess what it's called/ **Fungus II.** This shot is the title screen on the Commodore 64.



▲ *Fungus II.*



▲ *Joe's back.*

It's a funny old game!

● TV personalities **Greavsie and Saint** have been the subject of some heavy dealing recently bet – with several companies have bid for the rights to produce the football a football game with the famous duo's endorsement.

▼ *Saint and Greavsie – hoping to score.*



The likely winner in this tussle is likely to be Midlands based **Elite** – who have never produced a soccer game before.

The shape and content of the game is anybodies guess yet as all party's involved with the project keeping tight lipped about.

Greavsie is thought to have commented that it would be "a funny old game" to which Saint replied' "You kill me, Greavsie". More news on this one later.

Also making an appearance on the **Loriciel** label is the bungling – bespectacled, **'Eagle' Eddie Edwards.**

The skiing game was developed in France and



▲ *Are you ready for Eddie?*

features several winter sports events – as well as the ski jump for which Eddie became famous.

Fresh from leaping from a double decker bus in Leicester Square and then getting done for speeding – Eddie's computer game debut is being planned to take place in July.

Can anyone explain to me why these winter sports games keep coming out in the Summer?

Pip! Pip.!

● Aiming to take a sizable bite out of the UK games market are well financed new boys, **The Big Apple Entertainment** Co. New ideas include a "frequent buyers bonus", where tokens included in the game packets and elsewhere can be collected and exchanged for a Walkman, CDs etc. The packaging will be flip top cardboard boxes,

rather similar to cigarette boxes.

But it's the games that count – right? – and by what we've seen of their first, **Oops!,** a deceptively simple collecting game on a changing grid, these could be very playable indeed. Look for a review next ish, and further developments including a budget range and two big non coin-op licenses.



▲ *Three Stooges.*

Yuk! Yuk! Yuk!

● New from **Mirrorsoft's Cinemaware** is the **Three Stooges,** almost a computerised board game. You have 30 days in which to earn enough money to save a crumbling orphanage from the evil machinations of a complete and utter banker, and in doing so go through a series of misadventures based on famous moments from old Stooges movies, including food fights, boxing matches and hospital trashing.

Graphics on the Amiga are lovely, but you really have to be a board game and/or Stooges fan to appreciate it. Amiga version £29.99, C64 £14.99 and ST (£24.99) and IBM PC to follow.

Skyriders

● Follow up to **Stormtrooper** from new boys **Creation** is **Skyrider,** an arcade-style space shoot 'em up for the Atari ST, price £14.99.

Skate Date...

● **Gremlin** take to roller skates for its forthcoming sports simulation, **Skate Crazy.**

The action is set in a multi-storey car park where Freddy, the skater, must perform leaps, spins and skating backwards.

Points are added for successful manoeuvres but the Cred-O-Meter score is only moved upwards by achieving suitably 'posy' feats. Points gained on the Ouch-O-Meter, which measures grazes and bumps, and means a loss of points on the Cred-O-Meter.

Obstacles to negotiate include broken glass, stray dogs, oil and sand patches.

The game's side B contains different locations such as the underground subways and city streets.

Skate Crazy is out this month on Spectrum £7.99/£12.99, Amstrad and Commodore cassette and disk, £9.99/£14.99.

Race against Time

● Did you catch the launch of the charity fund raising game, **Race Against Time,** on ITV's Saturday morning television show **Get Fresh** on *May 7th.* If you didn't, shame on you. We did tell you – and even offered you a chance to be on TV.

All profits from the **Codemasters** game will be given to Sports Aid 88, the charity which is hoping to raise millions of pounds to fight poverty, hunger and disease.

It was the first time anybody had seen the game and eight youngsters – including four *C+VG* readers – took part in what is hoped to be the first of many Race Against Time challenges.

The winner was Justin Dawson who completed 53 per cent of the game. Can you beat that? If you can we want to hear from you? Go out and buy the game – it is for charity, after all, – and send us your score. We'll be printing the top ones. Why not send us a photograph as well.

Send your score to Race Against Time, Computer + Video Games, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

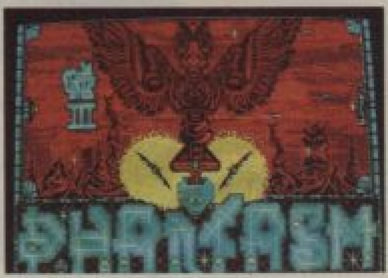


Store stars. ◄

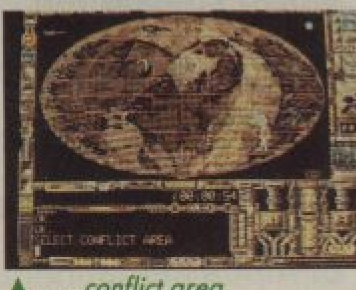
▼ *High score heroes.*

Phan-tastic

● **Phantasm** is a 3D surface skimming shoot 'em up out at the end of May from **Exocet.** You pick a conflict area from a map of the world, then go looking for trouble. £19.95 on the Amiga, ST to follow.



▲ Phantasm . . .



▲ *. . . conflict area.*



▲ *Laying down the law.*

Cop this!

● And suddenly the world is full of robotic cops. First **Robcop** and now **R.O.T.O.R.**

R.O.T.O.R. – the Robotic Officer Tactical Operations Research – is a specially programmed robot designed to fight crime and corruption – the ultimate law enforcer. But something goes and the R.O.T.O.R. become judge, jury and executioner. He even kills when a minor parking offence is committed. Can he be stopped? Find out when RCA/Columbia releases the R.O.T.O.R. on video this June, certificate 15.

Taking the Mickey

● **Gremlin's Mickey Mouse,** based very loosely on the *old Sorceror's Apprentice* section of Disney's masterful Fantasia, is due at the end of June. You, as Mickey, of course, must run around the four towers of a castle ridding it of ghosts and nasties with your magic hammer. There are also bonus games hidden in some of the rooms, including a **Donkey Kong** type thing, and upside down *Space Invaders* (if you can imagine that) and others. £7.99 on Spectrum (£12.99 disk). £9.99/£14.99 (C64), £19.99 (ST).



▲ *Mickey Mouse.*

Famine Aid

● **Drakcon '88,** a role playing games convention, will take place in Scotland between August 20 and 21, with all proceeds going to famine relief. Last year's convention raised more than £800.

The convention will be held at the College Dining Room, Northern College of Education, Hilton Drive, Aberdeen.

Events will include and AD&D role-playing tournament. Admission costs £5 (£3.50 for under 16's) for both days. There will be a £1 reduction for advance bookings made before July 9.

For further details send SSAE to Drak Con '88, c/o S. Douglas, 13 Springbank Terrace, Aberdeen, Scotland, AB1 2LS.

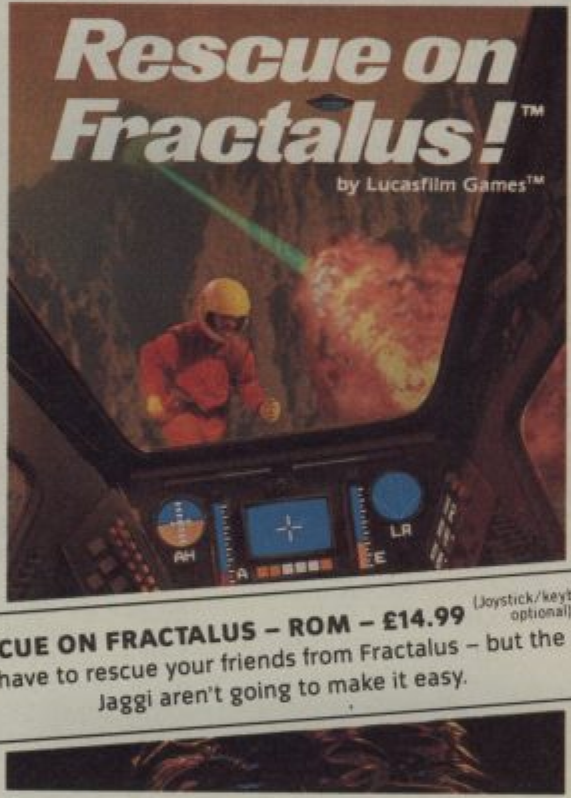
THE LATEST AND



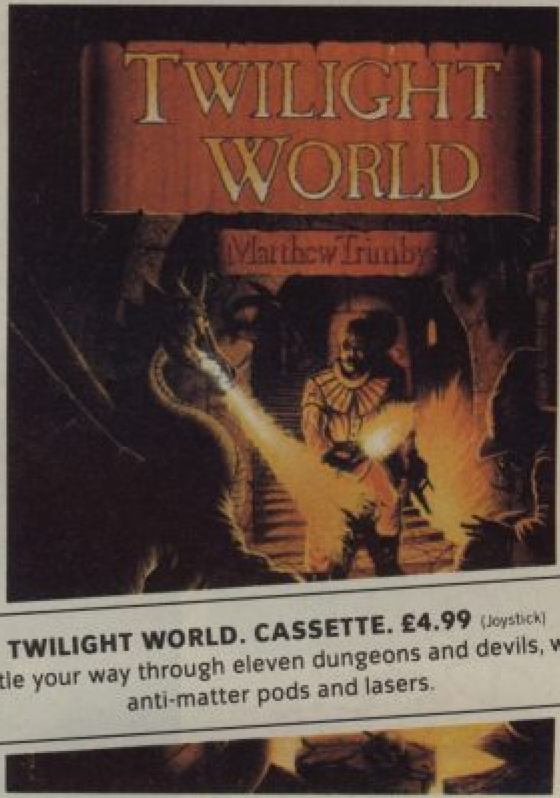
ARCHON – ROM – £14.99 (Joystick)
A battle between the forces of light and darkness. You can't take a square, you have to fight for it.



BALLBLAZER – ROM – £14.99 (Joystick)
Can you shoot the Plasmorb through the moving goalbeams while piloting your Rotofoil? For one or two players.



RESCUE ON FRACTALUS – ROM – £14.99 (Joystick/keyboard optional)
You have to rescue your friends from Fractalus – but the evil Jaggi aren't going to make it easy.



TWILIGHT WORLD. CASSETTE. £4.99 (Joystick)
Battle your way through eleven dungeons and devils, with anti-matter pods and lasers.

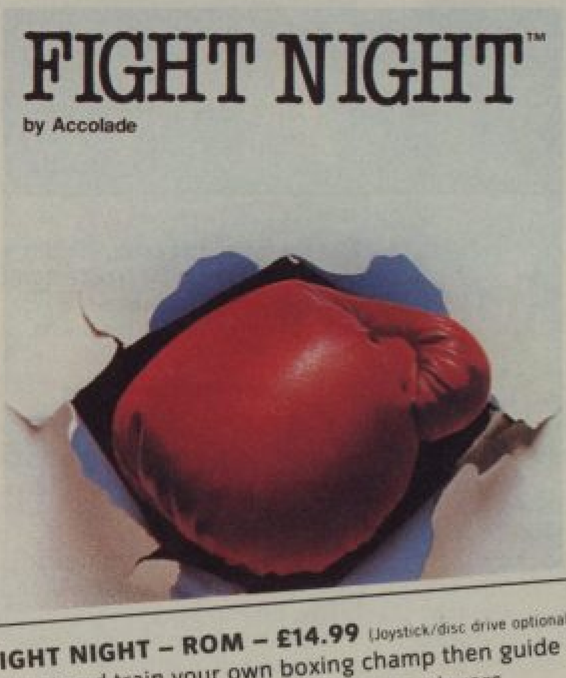
Atari have always had the greatest arcade games in the galaxy, now they're adding even more winners to the collection. From the high speed skills of handling a W.W.1 biplane, to the brain-aching Archon battle of wits. Whether you're landing the punches with Fight Night or using the awesome power of Thunderfox to blast the enemy, Atari give you the best combination of graphics speed and skill this side of Alpha Centauri.

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Construct and train your own boxing champ then guide him to the championship. One or two players.



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The Zylosian war machine is complete. Can you beat the horrendous odds in your Thunderfox?



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News

Show time

• The **Commodore Show** will be held at the Novotel, Hammersmith, between June 3 and 5.

The organisers are promoting the Amiga Studio as the highlight of the show, designed to show off the Amiga in the fields of music, speech synthesis, 2D and 3D design, graphics, animation and desk top publishing.

Olympic gold medallist **Tessa Sanderson,** Radio One DJ **Bruno Brookes** and members of the Chelsea football squad will be there.

Go to hell.

• Two new shoot 'em ups from **CRL** are **Hell and Back** and **Trigger Happy.**

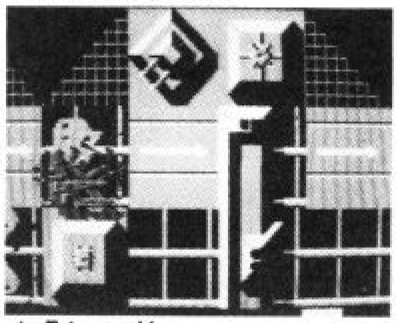
Hell and Back takes you on a quest through the Netherworlds to collect the ten Commandments, in the face of opposition from ghosts, ghouls and monsters, armed with a power bolt firing halo.



▲ *Hell and Back.*

Trigger Happy on the other hand sets you in this seat affair, clearing a 32 level of Space Station of aliens and stuff. There is a bonus extra level for you hot gamers.

Both are CBM64 games, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk.



▲ *Trigger Happy.*

Scroll on

• **Rainbird** is releasing a new adventure game from *C+VG* Golden Joystick award winners **Magnetic Scrolls** in June – **Corruption.**

Taking place in the currently fashionable world of high finance, you find yourself framed by your partner, chased by the mob and within a hair's breadth of ending up in jail. You'll have to be devious, manipulative and ruthless to succeed – just like your average *C+VG* ad manager, really. £24.95 for the ST, Amiga and IBM PC, with 8 bits to follow.

THE PICTURES THEY DIDN'T WANT YOU TO SEE

Or rather, the odd thing is that they DID! Seems these Software bods will go to any lengths to publicise new games

The clothes that taste forgot! Mark Strachan and Dominic Wheatley promote Domark's Trivial Pursuit – Baby Boomer edition. ▼





▲ *Amanda Barry demonstrates what she likes to do in her spare time.*

Always good for an embarassing photo is Richard Tisdall of US Gold. ▼



A worrying lapse of taste as Pete Austin (left) and orc friend allow themselves to be seen with a dodgy looking geezer in ill fitting wings and bursting fly. ▼



▼ *Oh dear, oh dear. Sean Brennan plumbs new depths for Samurai Warriors.*



▼ *What a plonker! Francis Lee of Destiny hunts Yeti in playground chic that went out with the Undertones.*



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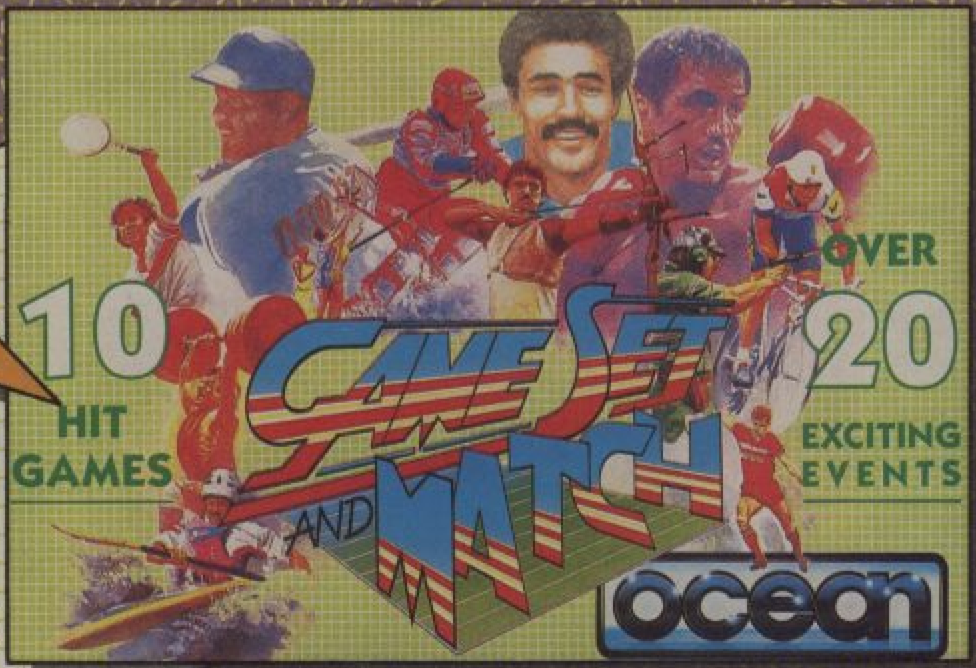
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Street Seen

A new 8-bit shoot 'em up from Gremlin is *Blood Brothers*, out now. You play one of two brothers from the mineral rich planet of Sylonia, whose mission is to recover a whole load of precious gems from the well-defended stolen goods planet of the hostile Scorpians. The first part of the game involves using laser armed jet bikes, and in the second part you fly down into the underground storage area using jet packs. Spectrum £7.99 cass.



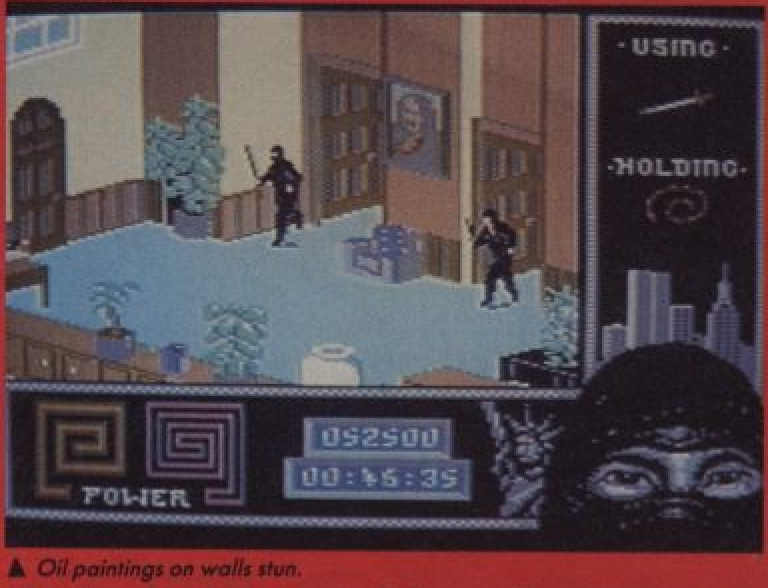
▲ Down into the tunnels in this Spectrum shot, but could you stand being called Hark or Kren?



▲ The name has changed, but the game's (almost) the same.

Looking rather nice is *Virus* for the ST, a conversion of the old Archimedes game *Zarch*, programmed by creator David Braben. You fly over a 3D landscape dropping missiles and bombs in an attempt to halt the spread of allent virus which is polluting the planet. There are various types of alien craft to take out, but let's hope it isn't quite as impossible to play as the original. £19.99 from Firebird, out in June with Amiga version to follow.

Oh yeah, and for anyone wondering about the name change, apparently Firebird bought the licence to the game on formats other than the Archimedes, but for some reason original publishers Superior Software wanted to keep sole copywrite on the name.



▲ Oil paintings on walls stun.



▲ The Ninja in New York.

Ninja II is about to be launched after months of development by top programmers John Twiddy and Mev Dink (Yes that really is his name).

The 64 and Spectrum versions have been developed side by side and enjoy identical game play. The Spectrum version does not have the full coured graphics of the 64 — but apart from that the versions are identical.

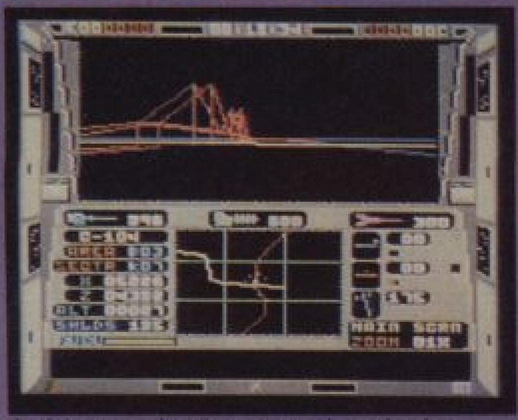
Set in New York — the Ninja's arch enemy has assumed the identity of a Tong Leader — in league with a corrupt city police force.

You track him through six different levels — each on a separate load.

Various items are there to be picked up — such as a Access Card, key, bits of food, and other odds and sods and — yes, you guessed it, I am not going to tell you what they are used for.

Ninja II will be launched at the unusual price of £12.99 for Spectrum and 64 cassettes. Mark Cale of System 3 feels that the extra money is justified because of the quality of the game and the huge amount of development time invested in it. But gamers can look forward to more than just a good sequel for their extra two pounds. Inside the new larger box you will find a shuriken (plastic — so don't even bother to think about using it in vengeance, a large map of the game and a Ninja mask).

Both versions are now finished. Expect to seem them in the shops next month.



▲ If this is an alien Star sector, then why does that look like the Humber bridge?



Flying across the 3-D landscape.

New from US Gold is *Echelon*, a combination flight sim/exploration adventure/shoot 'em up from the programmers of the very successful Golf simulation, *Leaderboard*. You play the pilot of the ultra advanced C104 Tomahawk patrol craft, based at top secret Space Federation base *'Echelon'*. You must fly lone reconnaissance and exploration missions in the largely unexplored zone 106, searching for the whereabouts of the troublesome space pirate stronghold.

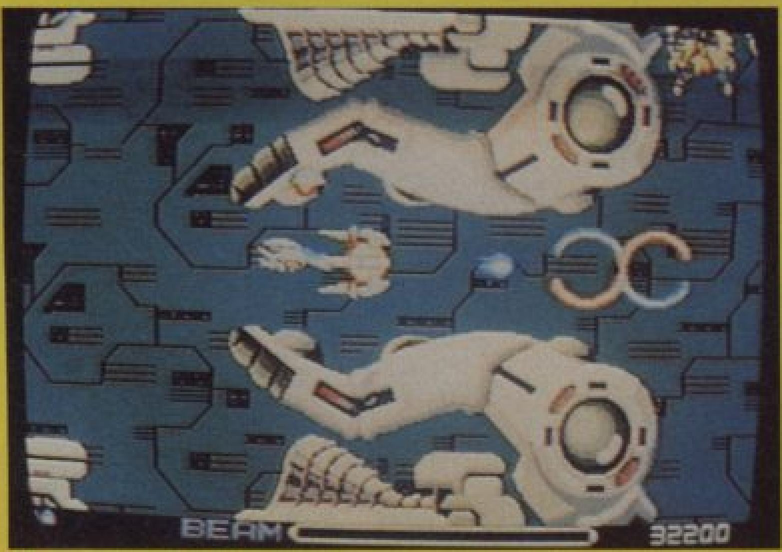
First you must master the controls of your vehicle, flying and landing anywhere within the zone, using either the 3D frontal view of the special feature that allows you to view your spacecraft from the outside. Later there are six different levels of difficulty in combating alien space craft to cope with, as well as the logical and strategic tests of locating the pirate base.

Best bit of all, though, is the Lipstick voice activated control headset, which enables you to fire simply by saying the word. This leaves hands free to cope with control of the spacecraft. By all accounts it's been very successful in the US, outselling even Access's previous hit, the aforementioned Leaderboard, so it has to be one to keep an eye out for this year.



▲ Some of the silly things you can do with Deluxe Video 1.2.

Electronic Arts has just released the PAL version of their Video Animation programme, *Deluxe Video 1.2.* If you don't know what *PAL* means, it is the name given to the British system of television, meaning that with the help of your Amiga you can now generate animated title sequences, add background music and sounds, and generally do lots of whizzo clever things to make your home vids looking professional. The price of broadcast quality rotating 3D text, wipes, fades and other good stuff is now only £69.95.



▲ Ghastly, wriggling serpents.



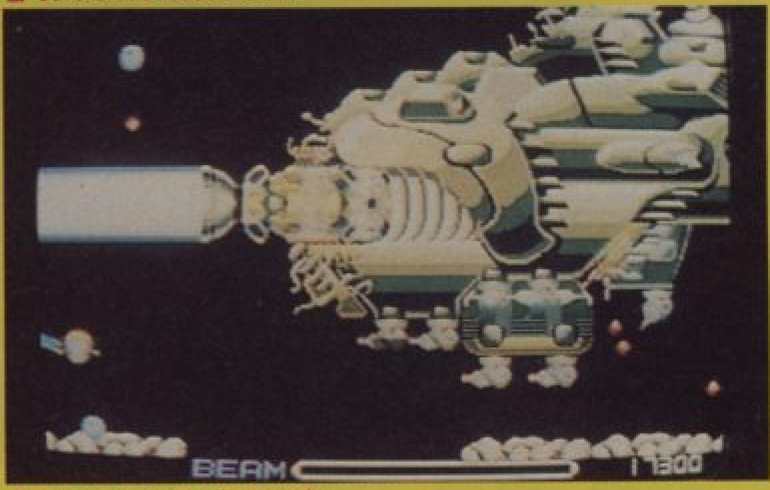
▲ Several hits needed to kill.

The ultimate shoot'em up ever written for play at home is here. *R-Type* for the *PC* Engine games console. Over the years we have played thousands of games and many of them have given great pleasure. None of them come even remotely close to this shoot 'em up.

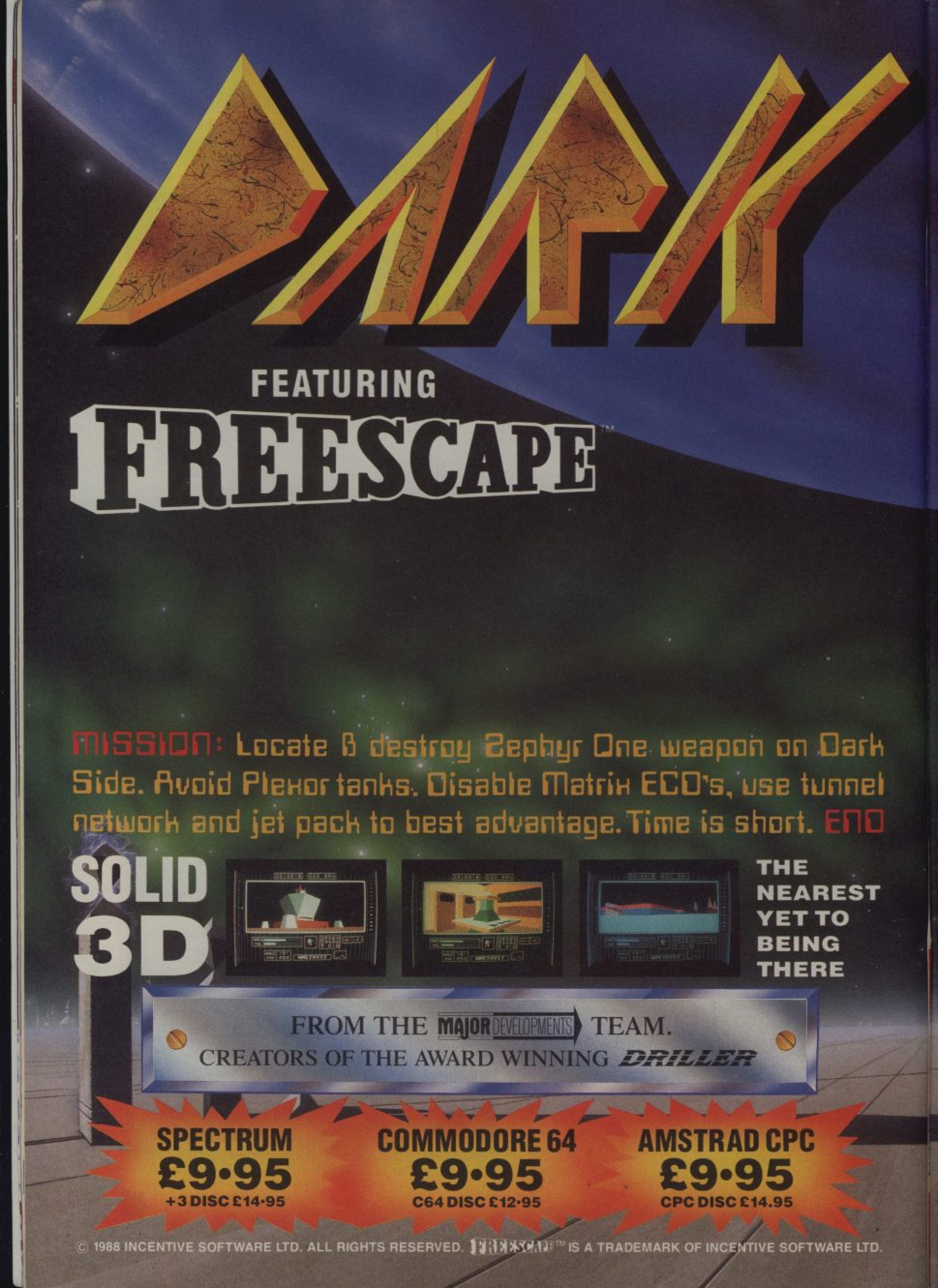
***R-Type* is a game from the Japanese company *IREM* and it is a Defender variant with plenty of power ups, tunes and stunning graphics.**

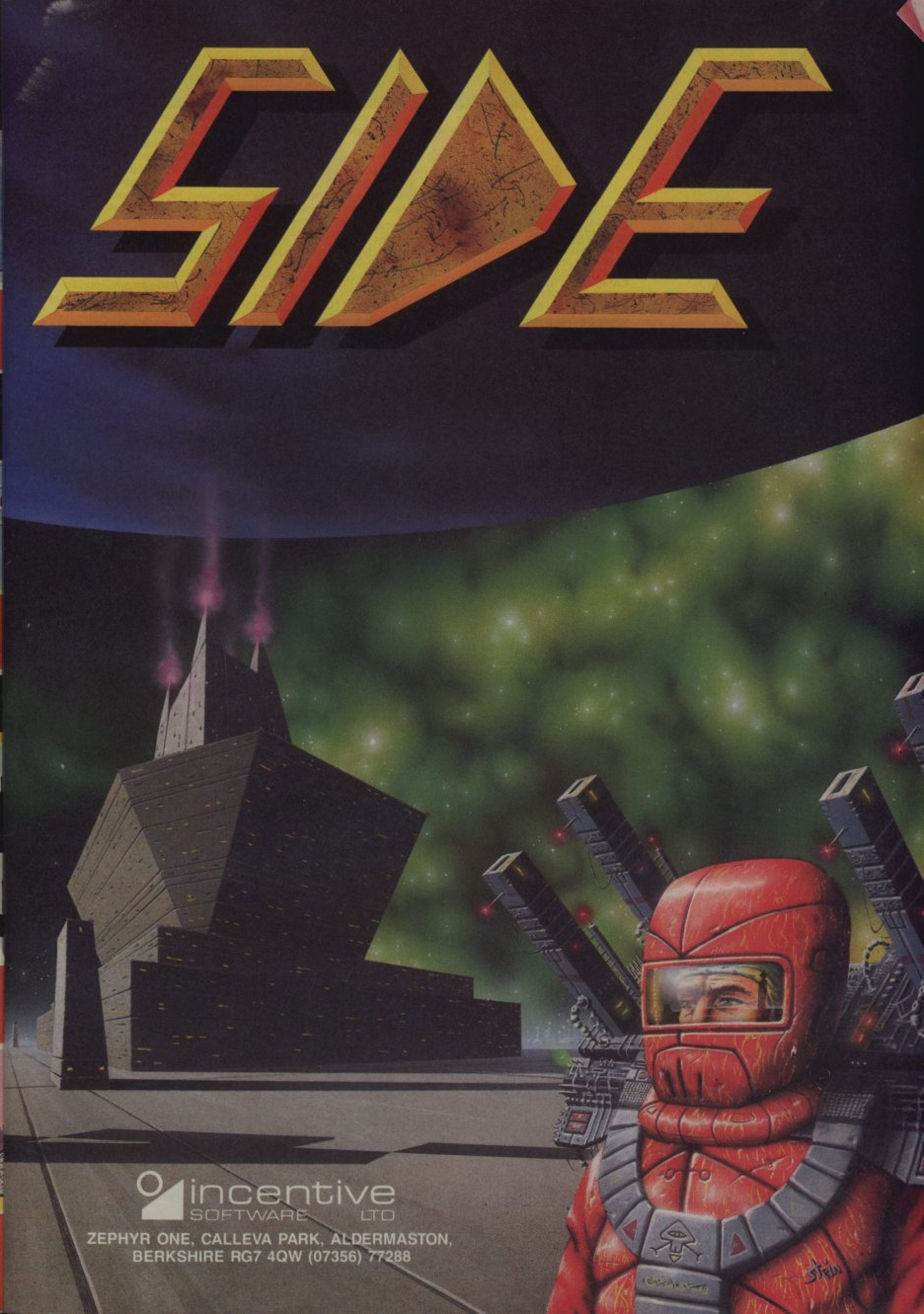
Take a look at the screenshots above. Could you tell the difference between these screens and those of the coin op?

If you don't own a *PC* Engine — (and you are not likely too as it probably won't be on sale here until next year) — then don't dispair — as Spectrum, Commodore 64, and ST versions of *R-Type* are well under way, and will be launched on the Activision label in September.



▲ Near coin-op quality graphics.


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C+VG REVIEWS

Gutz

► MACHINES: SPECTRUM, SPECTRUM +3, C64-128.
► SUPPLIER: OCEAN.
► PRICES: £7.95 (SPECTRUM) £14.95 (+3 DISK) £8.95 (C64/128 CASS) £12.95 (C-128 DISC).
► VERSION TESTED: C64.
► REVIEWER: TRISTRAM COFFIN.

This game surprised me. I find the whole area of rummaging around inside a body quite vomit inducing. Still, I thought, I'll try anything once and – wouldn't you know it – I found myself enjoying it.

I don't know if I believe the story that the game was inspired by graphic artist Andy Rixon's visit to his local hospital for a nasty internal examination – if he's got insides like this then it's surprising they let him out again, that's all I can say! He went away and chatted to his mates at Special FX, the people behind this offering, and persuaded them to spill their *Gutz*, if you'll pardon the pun.

Now, if you are sitting comfortably, we'll take a look at the plot. While on a mission to discover what is causing that huge blip on Earth's early warning detection systems, you come across a ten-trillion tonne mega-being from another universe, who eats you alive! It's not that he's particularly hostile or anything, but the in-flight food hasn't been up to scratch. How would you like to travel millions of light years across space with only a very small packet of dry-roast peanuts to keep you going?

Your job is to escape from the maze of arteries, intestines and tubes and get back to Earth in time to convince them to nip out for a mega-party bucket of Kentucky Fried Chicken before their hungry guests arrive and start consuming all the designer furniture.



◄ *Good clean fun.*

Micro Lea[gue]

► MACHINES: CBM64/ATARI ST.
► SUPPLIER: MICROPROSE.
► PRICES: £24.95 (ATARI ST)/£19.95 CBM 64 (DISK).
► VERSIONS TESTED: CBM64/ATARI ST.
► REVIEWER: CHRIS JENKINS.

Professional wrestling in America is even more farcial than it is over here; completely controlled by the Mob, it consists of enormous bruisers in golden capes pretending to throw each other around the ring while they try to work out the tax advantages of registering as a corporation. Microprose's *Micro League Wrestling* captures all the skill and sportsmanship of the game – that is to say, there isn't any.

Rather than try to create a test of skill and timing, like Melbourne House's *Rock'n'Wrestle*, Microprose has, typically, created a strategic simulation. Now, if you ask me, wrestling isn't much to do with strategy; the aim should be to out-fight your opponent, not think him into unconsciousness.

The game is presented in the format of a television broadcast, so before you play you have to sit through inane conversations between the wrestlers, including Hulk Hogan and Randy "Macho Man" Savage (do you believe that?) and the sports presenters.

The pictures of the fighters are digitised from TV, but for some reason they're presented in a sepia tint which makes them look like 1930's photographs. The aim of the game – once you actually get into it – is to outfight your opponent by working out his weaknesses and choosing the correct fighting move to exploit them.

On each side of the screen are lists of ten available offensive moves, and a defensive option. Selecting one from the list with joystick, mouse or keyboard, you press the fire button, wait to see

▼ *A kick without impact.*



▼ *Inane commentators.*



You have to destroy the alien's major internal organs. One by one you have to knock out the lungs, heart and brain. All these horrible wobbly things are hidden within a 3D scrolling maze of tubes and ducts. And each organ is protected by a shield which can only be destroyed by assembling a special weapon.

Oddly enough the alien has the bits for this weapon scattered about its insides. You can also find other useful things inside this space monster – things that will help you survive your mission; things like a map of the monster's innards, energy crystals, protective helmets, keys to super-weapon rooms and useful weapon-holds. More about these items later. When you first load up the game it's essential to race around and find the box which contains the map. Without this you're lost, but before you do that it's a good idea to find a weapon-hold – a sort of round blob on the wall – and open it to get ammo for your space-blaster. Once you've got these two items you're ready to play the game for real.

You'll find yourself in a maze packed full of 'orrible creatures, the mega-being's defence systems, all intent on wiping you out. If you've got the map, keep referring to it. Nothing can touch you while you are looking at the map, but it only stays on screen for three minutes at a time. Spot the location of the goodies you're after, like helmets, crystals, bits of weapon and so on, and then make a dash for them.

The map screen also shows you the best type of ammo for your weapon to deal with most of the nasties you'll encounter on that particular level. You get this ammo from the weapon holds. But each hold has a different sort – so make sure you get the right one for the job.

There are loads of these holds scattered about, so it's a matter of trial and error until you get the right one. It's a good idea to do this because you can build up a big score and win extra lives at the same time. You get an additional life for every 10,000 points. And you get to use the nifty hi-score chart at the end of the game. Watch out for the nice "mutating" letters and numbers!

The graphics are nice and big, animation is pretty good, music and sound effects likewise. Gameplay? Well, it's all good, clean fun! Like I said, despite my initial reservations, I found myself reluctantly liking the game, and eventually getting hooked on the thing.

- ► GRAPHICS 7
- ► SOUND 7
- ► VALUE 7
- ► PLAYABILITY 7

The Spectrum version of *Gutz* should be on sale by the time you read this, according to Ocean. It has the same game play as the Commodore version. No Amstrad version is planned.



Getting to the heart of the game? ►

eague Wrestling

your opponent's response, then the digitised images on the screen lurch into action, performing (or failing to perform) the selected move.

At the bottom of the screen are the commentators, who come up with more inane comments like "This is real wrestling!" and "Two holds don't make a match!" You can select the length of the bout before starting. I could only bear the shortest match – ten minutes – although you can opt for up to sixty minutes. Power and Damage counters change according to the success of your moves, and the better your position, the more chance you have of carrying out difficult moves. Each character has his own "super move", such as a flying kick or a double elbow smash, which is difficult to pull off but which scores plenty of damage points.

If you are in dire straits, you can boost your energy by calling on the support of the crowd. This only works once, so it's not to be wasted.

Once you've defeated Randy "Macho Man" Savage, you can move on to other intellectual giants such as Paul "Mr Wonderful" Orndorff. I doubt if you'll want to bother.

Micro League Wrestling is a bit of a turkey for several reasons. Firstly, since none of the wrestlers are famous over here, all the macho bull before the match is a complete waste of time.

Secondly, the digitised pictures are so bad – obviously more so on the CBM 64 than the ST – that half the time you can't make out what's supposed to be going on.

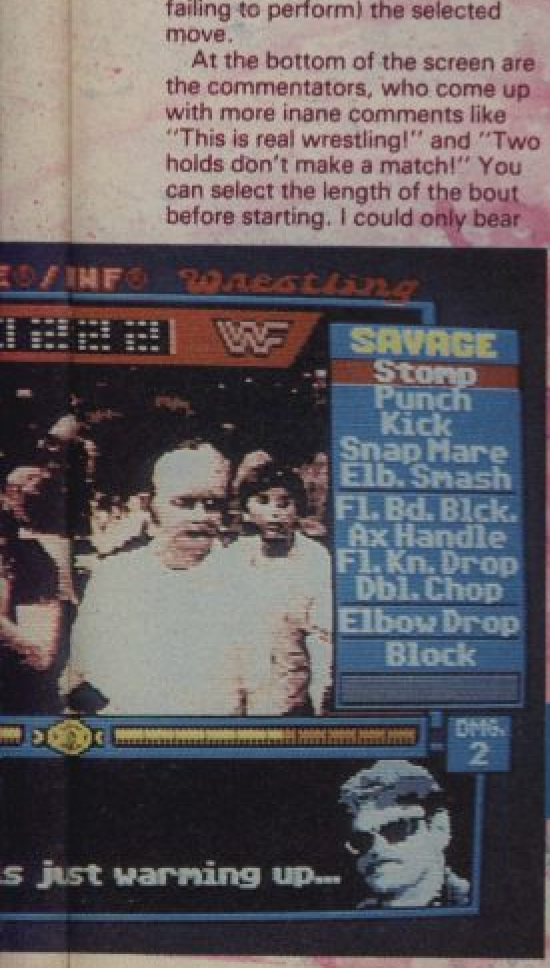
Thirdly, the sound effects are dire; a constant sea-like hiss of white noise representing the crowd, and a PLONK each time someone gets clobbered.

Fourthly, though there may be some skill involved in selecting the right moves, it would be much more satisfying if you could control the actions of the characters in real-time, as you can with more conventional combat games. Drop-kick this one straight out of the ring.

- ► GRAPHICS 5
- ► SOUND 4
- ► VALUE 3
- ► PLAYABILITY 3

News Flash: C + VG's jet set editor Eugene "Doesn't my Californian suntan go well with a white shirt" Lacey reports that Hulk Hogan has actually won the American Wrestling Championships. He and Randy "Macho Man" Savage also took the top tag title, according to Eugene.

However, on a more mundane note, there are no plans at present for any other versions of Micro League Wrestling.



▼ *Out for the count.*




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EPYX®

Lazer Tag

► MACHINES: CBM 64, SPECTRUM.
► SUPPLIER: US GOLD.
► PRICE: 64 £9.99/£11.99, SPECTRUM £8.99, AMSTRAD £9.99.
► VERSION TESTED: CBM 64.
► REVIEWER: EUGENE LACEY.



▲ *Lazer Tag – frustration.*



▲ *Non-violent computer game.*

Lazer Tag was hyped hugely at the PCW show last Autumn as the 'latest craze from America' that we all ought to be interested in.

A bit like primary school playground war where you surprise your enemy with an imaginary gun, shout 'bang' and he is dead except that now the game takes place in a futuristic set, and your guns use micro-beams to register direct hits on recorder devices worn on each player's chest.

It's a bit like one of those war games, *Combat Zone* for instance, only with a sci-fi theme. The real Lazer Tag is operated by a company called Worlds of Wonder at dozens of centres all over America.

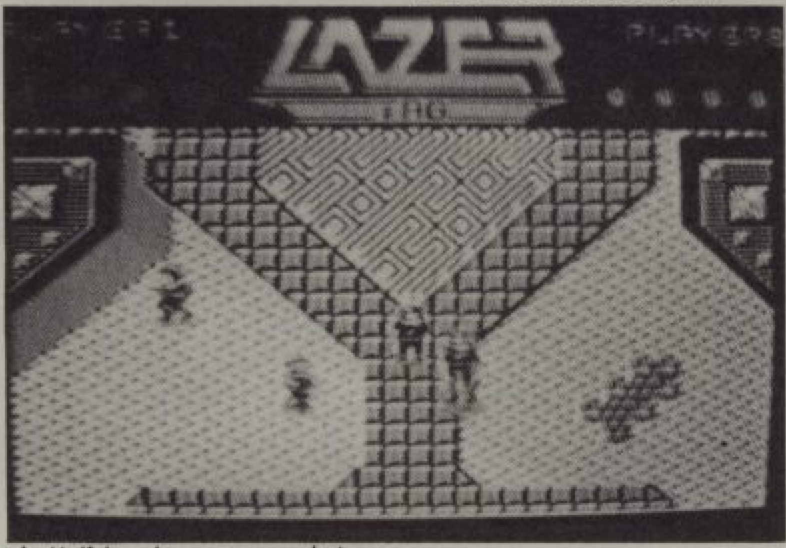
So how does it work as a computer game? Not very well has to be the first and most glaringly obvious observation about this game.

It was programmed for Go! by the development house Probe – who were also incidentally responsible for a number of the *Out Run* conversions.

In fairness to Probe they did start the design with a fairly serious handicap – the insistence of the *Lazer Tag* owners that the computer interpretation be completely non-violent.

Pretty tall for any computer game designer.

What they come up with is a combat game where your man scrolls in all directions firing his lazer at the other six players.



▲ *Half thought – out game design.*

What's non-violent about that you may wonder. Well – the men don't actually explode the targets on their chests simply glow and you 'hit' meter counts down.

Certain items are scattered around the floor like a gun and length of chain – though picking them up serves no purpose that I could work out.

As you scroll up-screen there are fences at the end of each section. Your man occasionally sticks to these again for no discernable reason.

A tank-like vehicle may rumble across the screen or a copter appears and start straffing you but there appears to be nothing you can do about it.

The lazer gun fire itself has a neat idea in that the bullets can bounce off angle to hit their targets.

Quite complex patterns of lines can streak around the screen. This could have been the basis of challenging game, especially if two players could have played simultaneously.

Unfortunately you have such little control over the laser and your player that it fails totally. It is entirely down to chance whether you hit the targets or not.

To add to the frustration, *Lazer Tag* is also an 'against the clock' so that just as you are trying to work out what the blazes is going on you have to start all over again.

The play area is dotted with spinning satellite dishes which – according to the instructions – increase your fire power when you shoot them.

Not so in my version. I blasted away for ages – all to no avail.

It would be possible to go on listing the faults of this game but it wouldn't serve much purpose. What we have here is game design that was only half thought-out and an implementation only partially carried through. This would have received a luke warm reception as a budget title – but at ten quid our advice is avoid it like the plague.

This is an unfortunate release for Go! – as they do have some excellent other titles about to be launched such as Bionic Commandos and Wizard Wars.

Lazer Tag is the dog in the pack.

► GRAPHICS	4
► SOUND	3
► PLAYABILITY	1
► VALUE	1

Well, after that review it's doubtful whether you'll be champing at the bit to know about forthcoming *Lazer Tag* conversions. If there is no dramatic improvement in the game design, you will be well-advised to save your money or at least look for another game to spend your hard-earned pennies on.

Anyway, *Lazer Tag* will be released on the Amstrad, £9.99 cassette and £14.99 disk, and the Spectrum, £8.99 cassette only.

At the moment there are no plans to release 16-bit versions, although it's doubtful whether this will cause great upset among Atari ST and Commodore Amiga owners.




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Road B

Eat dust, buster. You've got to be a hard-nosed highway star to handle *RoadBlasters,* the ultimate driving and combat game so far.

In the end only one Tarmac Titan can survive in this half-crazed future. Who will that warrior be? Can you deliver the fatal blow?

Well, you'll need tip-top driving skills, deadly accurate shooting talents and staying power to triumph in this half-road race, half-combat but 100 per cent excitement game.

US Gold's conversion of this fantastic Atari coin-op, based on the Matchbox toy car, should be erupting into the software stores anyday now.

The task of putting *RoadBlasters* onto the Commodore 64 has fallen to Amazing Products, the father and son programming team responsible for the 64 version of *OutRun,* now probably the world's best-selling game.

The aim of *RoadBlasters* is to keep right on to the end of the road – and survive! But this game makes *OutRun* look like a Sunday afternoon pleasure drive. All hell lets loose as attacks come from other cars, bikes, mines and road-side gun emplacements.

The car you drive is already equipped with a laser to put zap in your zip. The road leads through a progression of countries with alternating checkpoints and rally points.

The checkpoints are midway goals to aim for with the promise of extra fuel to top up your gas guzzler. Rally points are similar to the finish lines in ordinary races. Get there and you have completed a race section. In all there are 50 sections to



▲ *Watch out for the mines.*

compete.

The game ends not if you get blown up a few times – and you will – but if you run out of fuel. All the route are green and red fuel globes to collect. In some sections you can afford to miss out on a few of them but on others it's more or less essential to get everyone to complete the race section.

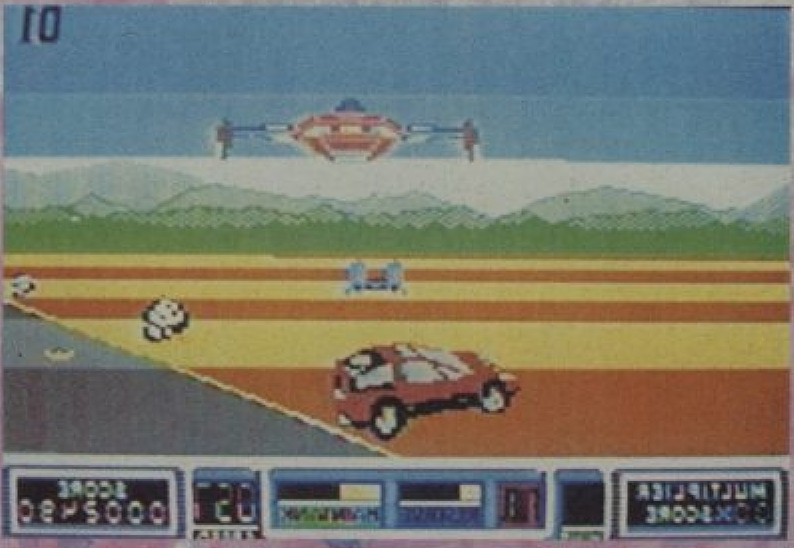
And now for the enemy.

Command cars. These are fast, sleek and heavily armoured. They don't actually attack you but if, under normal circumstances, you collide with one, it's a wipe out. They can be destroyed if you can get the right weapons. Then it's 100 points for you if you can destroy them.

Stingers. These are fast cars which can be destroyed if you're quick enough. Sometimes they will release a fuel pod. You get 50 points for a kill.

Rat jeeps or buggies. These zippy machines can appear from nowhere, cut you up and cause crashes. Again it's 50 points for a kill.

Motorcycles. Fast and lethal if they get in your way. 100 points for a kill.



▲ *Supply plane drops an add on.*

Mines. At any stage you can come a cross single or a series of mines scattered on the highway. Avoid them at all costs otherwise the zoom will turn to boom.

And when you're at full speed, that's easier said than done. On some stretches of the road, the mines are placed in strategic patterns.

Gun Turrets. These are found at the roadside, either on their own or in whole groups. The barrage they lay down can be deadly. Take them out and it's 200 points added to your score.

Sometimes it's best to drive as close to the turrets as possible. In that way it's possible to drive under the fire.

Spikers. These prickly-looking objects are dropped from enemy cars. Avoid them at all costs.

Toxic Spills. Hit one of these and you go slip-sliding away.

That's the sum of the powerful forces against you. But you can even up the odds for survival by collecting other weapons.

At certain points in a race



▲ *The loading screen.*

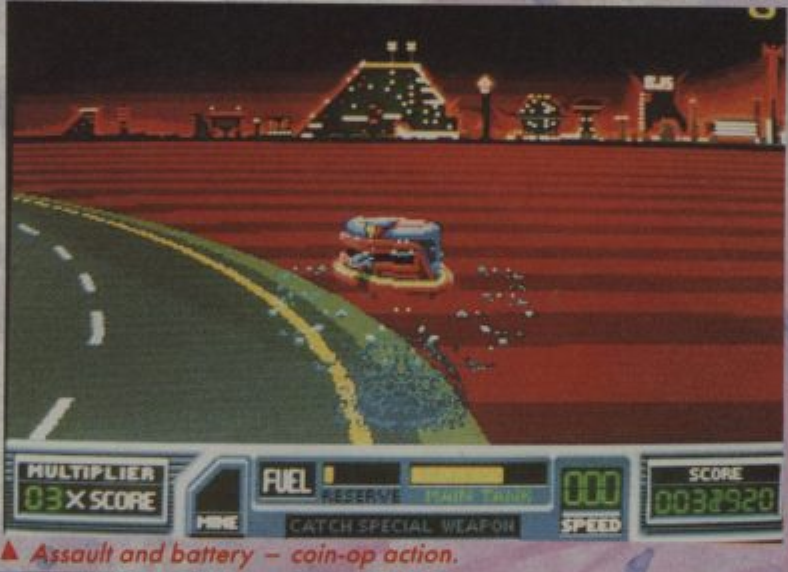
Blasters

section a support jet zooms in and drops a new weapon. If you can dock with this weapon – basically by letting it drop onto your roof – the enemy can take a pounding. But if you crash, you lose the weapon.

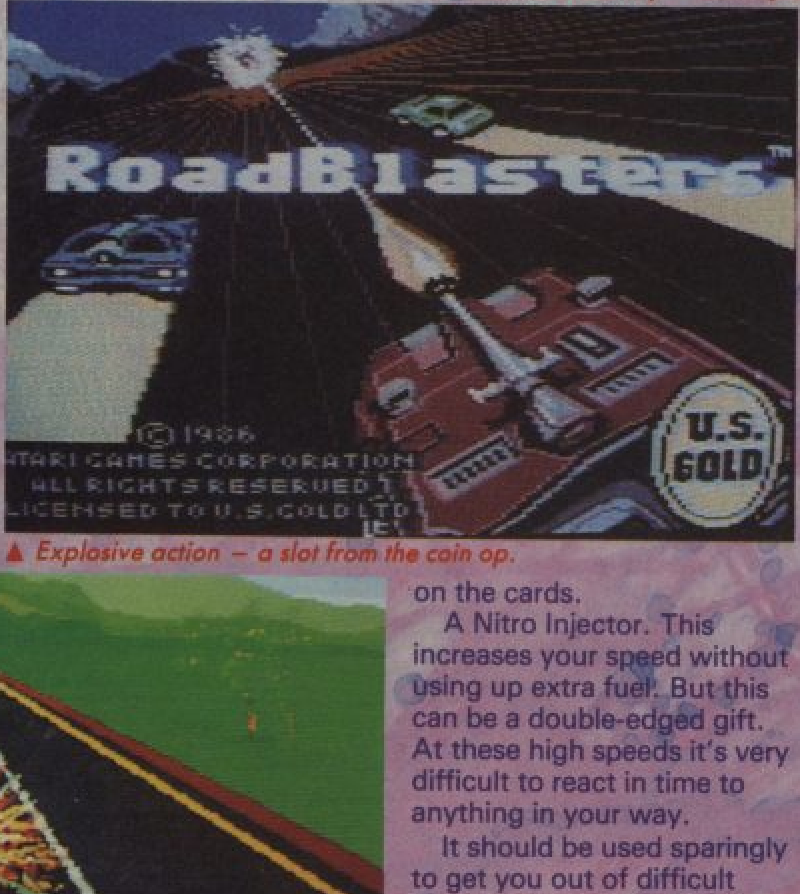
Up for grabs are:

A Cruise Missile. This wipes out everything on the highway but you can only fire three times.

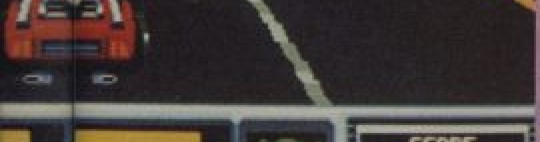
It's important that you choose the right moment to fire – and that's when the road is packed and a crash is on the cards.



▲ *Assault and battery – coin-op action.*



▲ *Explosive action – a slot from the coin op.*



A Nitro Injector. This increases your speed without using up extra fuel. But this can be a double-edged gift. At these high speeds it's very difficult to react in time to anything in your way.

It should be used sparingly to get you out of difficult situations.

UZ Cannon. This increases your fire power by about a third.

This is the master blaster.

Electro Shield. Get this and you become invincible for a certain time.

The CBM 64 programmers, father and son Dennis and Martin Webb, have packed all the game's original features into five loads.

"We've tried to keep *RoadBlasters* as close to the original as possible," said Dennis, who is responsible for the game's graphics. Son Martin concentrates on the programming.

"Nothing has been copied from *OutRun,*" adds Martin.

OutRun attracted quite a few adverse comments from the critics and the Webbs are, understandably, a little upset.

"We gave it our best shot," says Dennis. "We were very proud to have done it. I do hope people who bought the game don't feel cheated."

The Webbs hit the big time as a programming team relatively quickly. Their first published games were *Max Torque* and *Snap Dragon* for BubbleBus. Then came the Commodore 64 *OutRun* commission. And now *RoadBlasters.*

Future plans are underwraps at the moment.

Meanwhile, back to *Roadblaster* and other conversions.

Work is underway out on the Spectrum, Amstrad, Commodore, Amiga and Atari ST versions. At the time of writing US Gold plans to release all versions during June.

COMPETITION

How would you like to get your hands on a hard-driving, sense-stunning, brain-banging, muscle-mangling *Roadblasters* coin-op?

The impossible dream? A flight of fantasy? Not with Computer + Video Games it isn't. US Gold has given one of these mean machines for you to win.

All you have to do is answer these US Gold game questions to be with a chance. Ready?

1. What is the name of the mega successful US Gold/Access Golf game? Answer..............................

2. What was US Gold's number one smash game this Christmas? Answer..............................

3. What are the four coin-op conversions scheduled for release on US Gold's Go label? Answer..............................

4. *Gauntlet* was another US Gold smash. Who produced the original coin-op? Answer..............................

Tie Break. In not more than 25 words say why you would like to win a Roadblasters Coin-op.

Roadblasters Competition

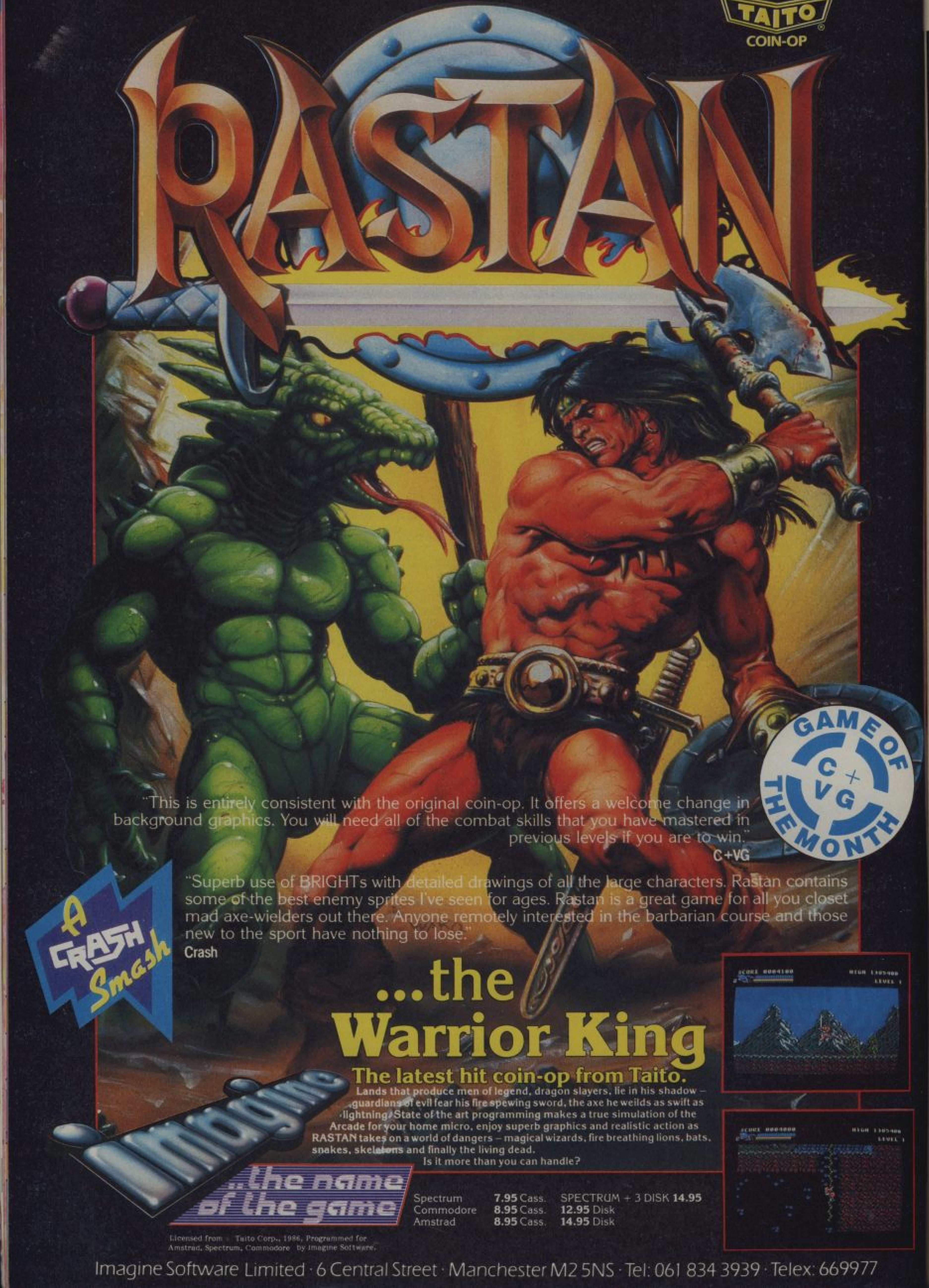
Name.......................Age............

Address..............................

....

....

The closing date for the competition is June 16th and the editor's decision is final.


TAITO
COIN-OP
RASTAN
"This is entirely consistent with the original coin-op. It offers a welcome change in background graphics. You will need all of the combat skills that you have mastered in previous levels if you are to win."
C+VG
GAME OF THE MONTH C+VG
"Superb use of BRIGHTs with detailed drawings of all the large characters. Rastan contains some of the best enemy sprites I've seen for ages. Rastan is a great game for all you closet mad axe-wielders out there. Anyone remotely interested in the barbarian course and those new to the sport have nothing to lose."
Crash
A CRASH Smash
...the Warrior King
The latest hit coin-op from Taito.
Lands that produce men of legend, dragon slayers, lie in his shadow – guardians of evil fear his fire spewing sword, the axe he weilds as swift as lightning. State of the art programming makes a true simulation of the Arcade for your home micro, enjoy superb graphics and realistic action as RASTAN takes on a world of dangers – magical wizards, fire breathing lions, bats, snakes, skeletons and finally the living dead.
Is it more than you can handle?
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Quadralian

► MACHINES: ATARI ST, AMIGA (OTHERS TO BE ANNOUNCED).
► SUPPLIER: LOGOTRON.
► PRICE: N/A.
► VERSION TESTED: ATARI ST.
► REVIEWER: DAVID BISHOP

Some time ago Logotron released a fiendishly designed puzzle game called XOR which attracted a modest cult following amongst devotees of the gendre. Now Astral Software, creators of XOR, have come up with a sequel called *Quadralian* which, they hope, will appeal to many more mainstream gamers.

Although by no means abandoning the puzzle influence of its predecessor, *Quadralian* is an attempt to woo the more arcade-minded punter with slicker graphics and lots of moving thingies with the added attraction of being able to trash most of them with a laser.

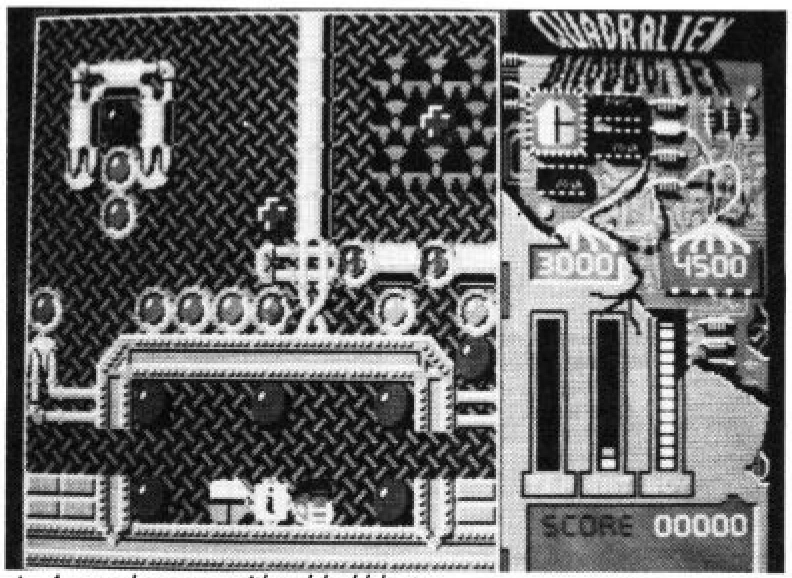
By the middle of the 21st Century, man's insatiable appetite for energy has necessitated the deployment of a number of huge nuclear power stations in permanent orbit around the Earth.

As luck would have it, some incredibly inconsiderate alien life-form has chosen one of these power stations to live in, feeding off the raw energy being produced by the core of the reactor.

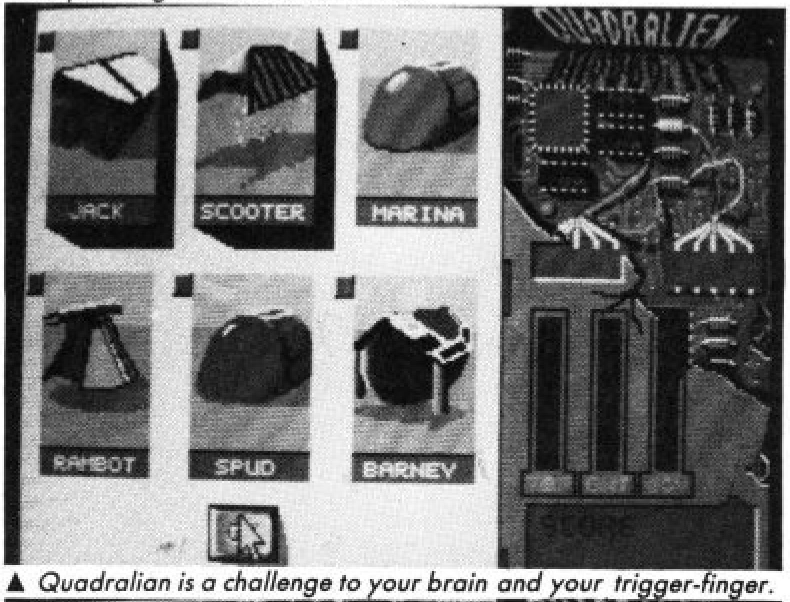
The action takes place in the four levels of the power station and is viewed from above through a multi-directional scrolling window. Having selected two out of the six droids available to you, your task is to guide them through the six locations on each of the levels, mopping up all things radioactive as they go.

But life is never that simple and many of the locations have either been devastated by fire causing all the lighting to fail, contain hidden contamination which only a Geiger counter can expose, or are such sensitive areas that lasers are automatically disabled.

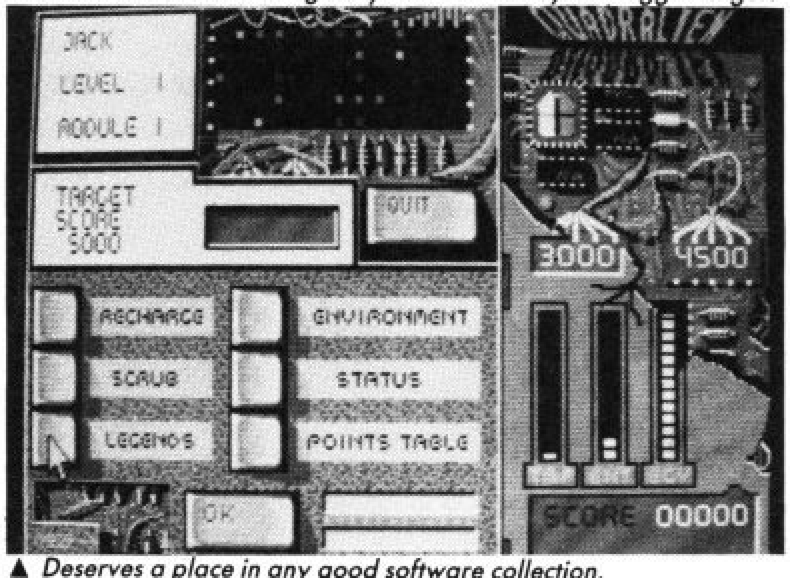
In fact every location poses its own special set of problems so it's imperative to select the droids best equipped to deal with each new set of circumstances as it comes along.



▲ *A puzzle game with added blast.*



▲ *Quadralian is a challenge to your brain and your trigger-finger.*



▲ *Deserves a place in any good software collection.*

Apart from vast quantities of radioactive contamination, each room is packed full of various elements, some static, others moving or movable, but all of which pose one problem or another to the mobility or life expectancy of your droids.

Elements include force fields which restrict movement to a single direction, and Attractors (A's) which were originally the robotic work-force on the station, but which now are charged so that they are drawn together when in close proximity to one another.

Repellers (R's) are the exact opposite to attractors preferring where possible, to keep their distance to each other. A's and R's can be pushed around the room and destroyed by laser fire. But, because of the way they react to one another, moving one of these highly-charged ex-robots often causes many others in the immediate vicinity to ove as well.

Predicting what effect moving an A or R will have, is one of the more challenging aspects to *Quadralian*.

Each successive level presents you with a fresh set of ever more devious problems to solve, as well as a new rash of aliens to blast. As you progress through the game you'll learn what droids to use where, and will soon recognise all the different elements automatically, rather than having to continually use the console readout screens to remind you of what they are.

Having progressed this far up the learning curve you can concentrate fully on the task as hand which is both enjoyable and challenging to brain and trigger-finger alike.

All in all a fine marriage between arcade and puzzle game, rounded off by some nice David Whittaker music, worthy of a place in any thinking person's software collection.

► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	6
► PLAYABILITY	7
► VALUE	8

Revenge II

► MACHINE: ATARI ST.
► SUPPLIER: MASTERTRONIC.
► PRICE: £9.99.
► REVIEWER: CHRIS JENKINS.

I remember when Jeff Minter was the one remaining hope in the games software industry, the last of the wild-eyed, shaggy-haired independents churning out crazy games guaranteed to pop your eyeballs. What a disappointment, then, that Jeff has failed to meet the challenge of the Atari ST and the Amiga by coming up with games as amazing as were his early efforts on the Commodore 64.

Not that *Revenge II* is really Jeff's work; while the concept's identical to that of his eight-bit versions, all the programming work was done by Icon Design, and a right hash they've made of it.

Having thousands of sprites dashing around exploding is fine on an eight-bit machine, but on an ST we expect something in the way of graphic sophistication.

All we have here is lousy sound effects, and chunky low-resolution sprites performing in front of what could have been nice backgrounds if it weren't for the cotton wool clouds and featureless skies.

The plot? Minimal. You're a 90 foot high death-spitting neutronium-shielded mega-camel, and you have to blast thousands of sprites resembling Pacmen, glasses of lager, cigarette ends, telephone boxes – you know, the usual stuff.

You can shoot in any direction while running along the ground or leaping through the air to drop dombs. Collecting special tokens adds bonus points, and at the end of every round, if you aren't reduced to a collapsing skeleton by collisions with baddies, you are returned to the Game Grid. Here you have the option to use your bonus points to buy new weapons, including Big Bullets, Smart Bullets, extra shields and extra camels.

Then it's time to choose the next zone you want to tackle on the grid (you can play through the game in any one of dozens of directions) and return to the mayhem.

Each gridzone you've played becomes transparent if you've completed it, or marked with a cross if you died. The only aim is to complete 100 per cent of the grid, and goodness knows what happens then because I don't think anyone would have the patience to do it.

A big disappointment really, firstly because Icon Design have done absolutely nothing to enhance the game in transferring it to the ST, and secondly because Jeff Minter should have been able to come up with something much more impressive than this by now.

For some reason which is completely beyond me this Atari ST version of Revenge II carries an endorsement from a Commodore 64 magazine.

What is the point of that? For what possible reason would an ST owner want to know whether or not the game was any good on the 64?

That gripe aside it is still nice to see Mastertronic whacking out 16-bit titles at £9.99. Sure Revenge II is not the best thing either of them have ever done – but remember just a couple of issues ago – the excellent Side Winder – that was a C + VG Game of the Month, so I am sticking with M'tronic for the time being.

► GRAPHICS	5
► SOUND	5
► PLAYABILITY	5
► VALUE	5



▲ *Oh, God . . . the camels are back!*



▲ *I hate bloody camels.*

Where is the hippy now?



STOP PRESS...
Alive and well and still saying 'wow' according to a recent rumour. Though most recent sightings of the hairy one have been in deeply agricultural North Wales – he is still tinkering with his visionary Colour Space utility. However, don't expect to buy it for your home computer. It is now so sophisticated that its proper place would be on stage to enhance the lights shows for live gigs. How about it Pink Floyd?

Ou

► MACHINES: SPECTRUM, CBM 64, ATARI ST, AMIGA, AMSTRAD, SEGA.
► SUPPLIER: US GOLD.
► PRICES: CBM 64/128 £9.99 CASSETTE, £11.99 DISK, SPECTRUM £8.99. AMSTRAD CASSETTE £9.99, DISK £12.99, ATARI £19.99. (SEGA VERSION DISTRIBUTED BY MASTERTRONIC).
► REVIEWER: EUGENE LACEY.

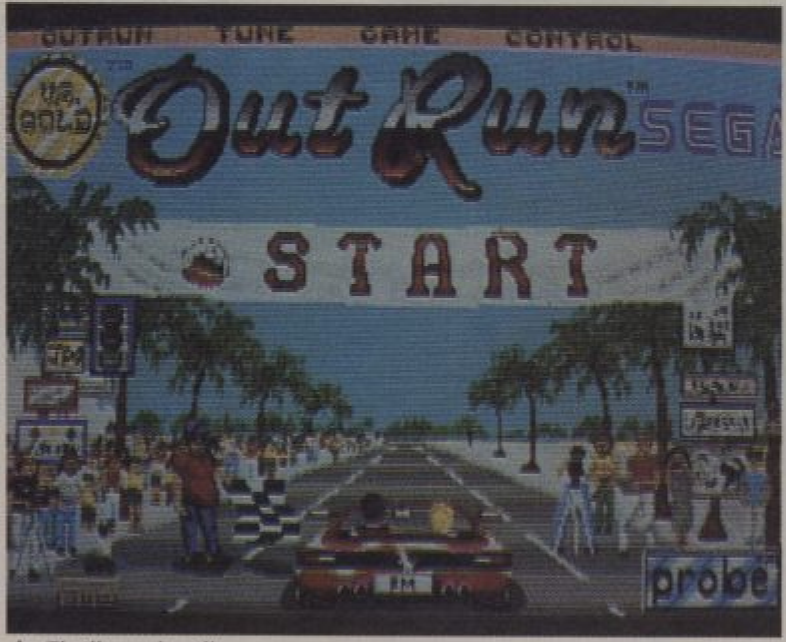
At last a decent version of *Out Run*. The ST version has been a long time brewing at US Gold but it has been worth the wait.

There can't be a computer games fan in the country who hasn't by now had a go on the best driving coin-op ever released. If you haven't, just let me describe it as every red blooded male's fantasy – a Ferrari Testarossa, an open Californian coastal highway, a beautiful blond beside you, and the sun in the sky.

The 8-bit versions received a mixed reception from the reviewers bur the games playing public loved it – making it the best selling game of last year, also voting it C + VG readers Game of the year at the Golden Joysticks Awards.

If you are lucky enough to own an ST you are in for a treat. The best thing about this version is that it is *Out Run* in its entirety extended play levels, the map at the end of each session showing you your progress, and most of the graphical thrills and spills of the coin-op are here.

Don't get me wrong. This is a far from perfect conversion – but it does succeed in getting the fun and excitement of the coin-op across on a home machine in a way that the other versions fail to. That in itself is a considerable achievement.

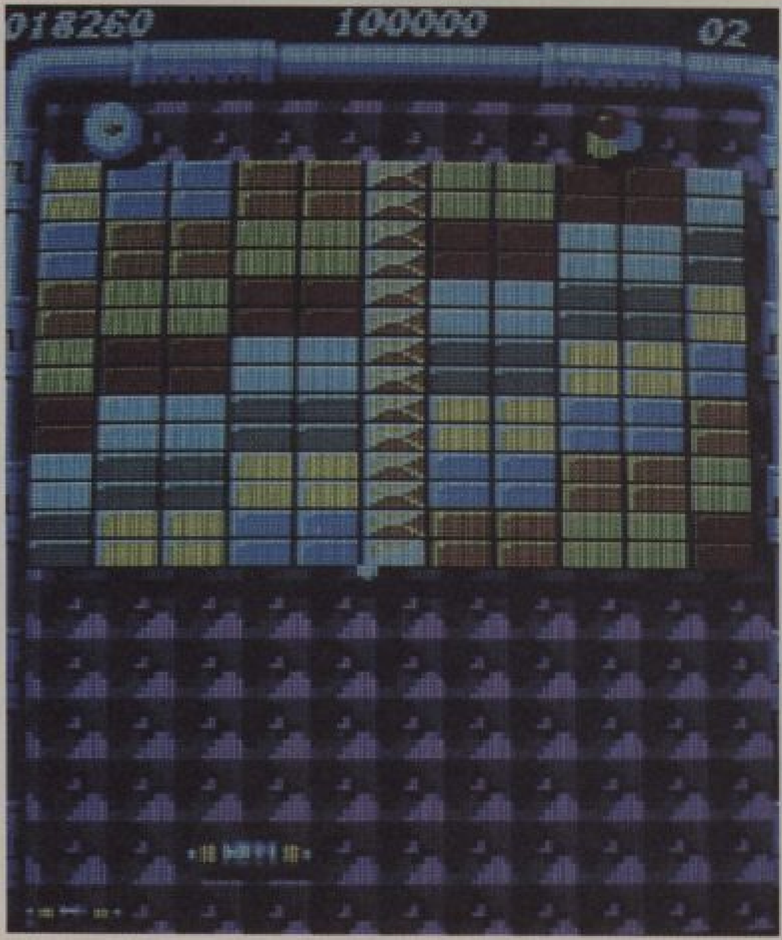


▲ *Thrills and spills.*



▲ *Burning rubber.*

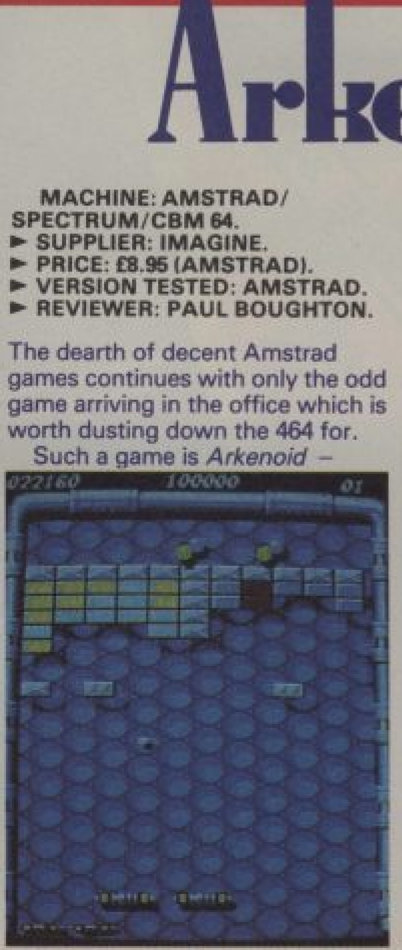
Arkenoid-Re



MACHINE: AMSTRAD/ SPECTRUM/CBM 64.
► SUPPLIER: IMAGINE.
► PRICE: £8.95 (AMSTRAD).
► VERSION TESTED: AMSTRAD.
► REVIEWER: PAUL BOUGHTON.

The dearth of decent Amstrad games continues with only the odd game arriving in the office which is worth dusting down the 464 for.

Such a game is *Arkenoid – Revenge of Doh*. Is Imagine the only software house turning out decent Amstrad games these days?



Of course, it's the old, old *Breakout/Tonic Tiles/Addictaball/Trazz/Arkenoid 1* formula re-made, re-modelled and re-marketed. But it's still a damn good game worth shelling out for.

The Amstrad version is probably the hardest of all the *Breakout* clones I've played. It took an enternity to clear the first screen-due mainly to the fact that the first line of bricks had to hit at least three times before disappearing and that the bat movement was so slow. It was like playing in treacle.

However, once the first line of defence crumbles things become a little easier.

The weapon capsules come thick and fast, dropping not just singly but in whole clusters, making it difficult to choose which one to go for. I often found I got

◄ *Damn good game.*

trun

The lasting appeal of this fairly simple, against the clock, driving challenge has been greatly increased by the addition of several game play options.

Graphics are competent in this version – though not in the super league. They aren't very smooth.

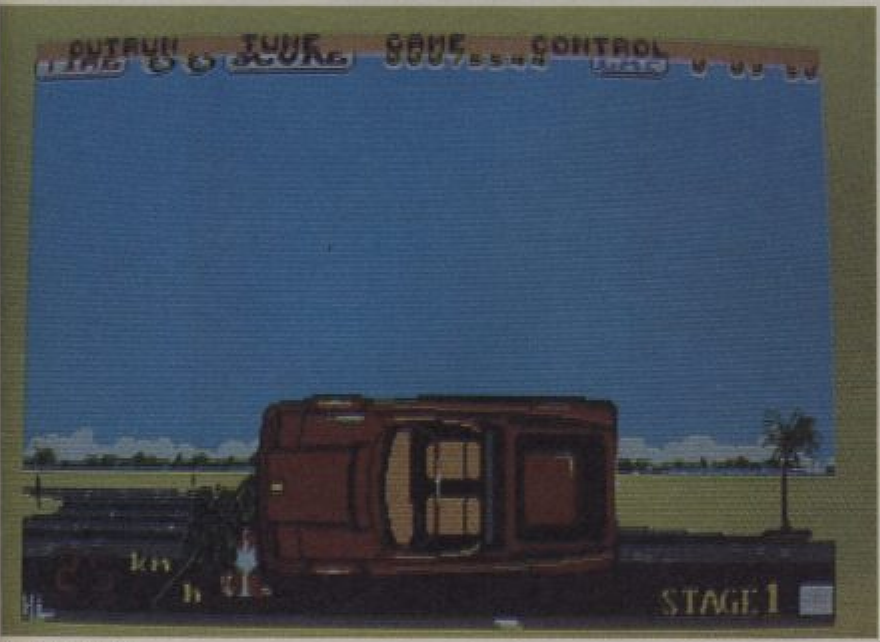
Apart from these moans about the animation the drawings themselves are fine.

What really sets the ST version apart from the 64 and Speccy renderings of *Out Run* is the sound. Here is the *Out Run* music on a home system for the first time, courtesy of Dave Whittaker, probably the best computer muso around now that Hobbard has hopped off California.

US Gold can breath a hefty sigh of relief with this version of the brilliant Sega coin-op. A lot was expected of the first 16-bit version and no one need be embarrassed about it.

If you own an ST you simply mustn't be without a copy of *Out Run*. A game to keep coming back to.

- ► GRAPHICS 7
- ► SOUND 7
- ► PLAYABILITY 7
- ► OVERALL 7



▲ *Roll over.*



▲ *Crash smash.*

evenge of Doh

the right one only to find another capsule dropping onto the bat before I could move away.

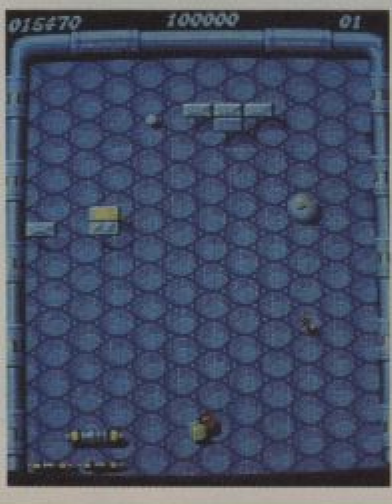
These capsules are the normal ones you'd expect from this sort of game plus a few new ones.

They include, bat enlarger – and one which diminishes its size – lasers, stickability, double bats, multiple balls etc.

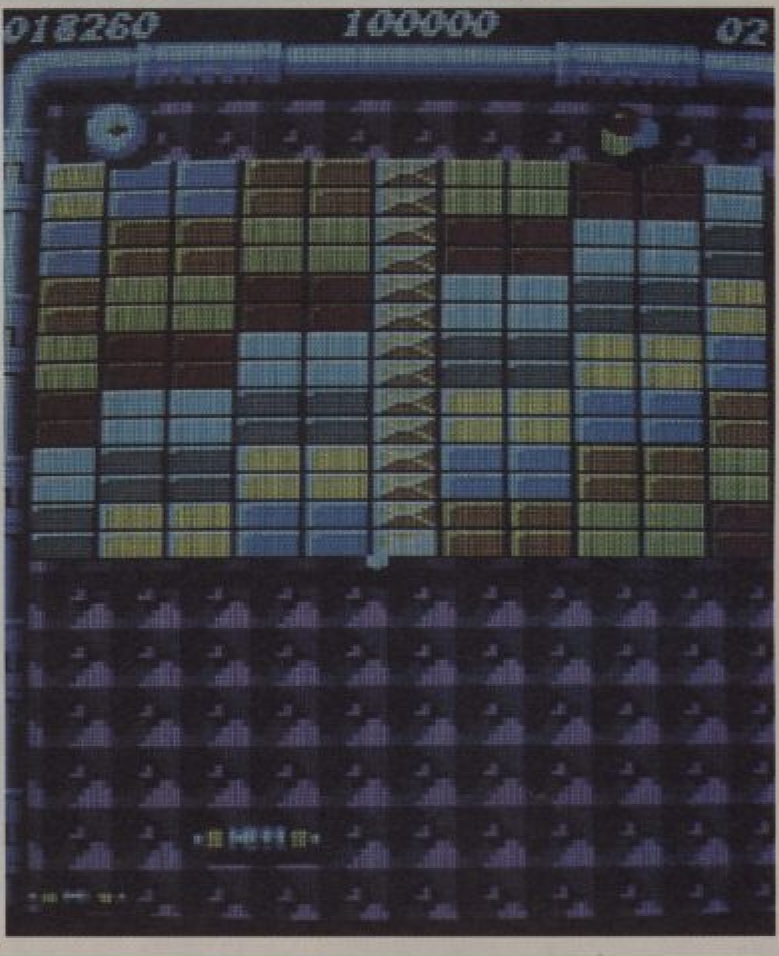
Clear the screen and you're given a choice of the next screen. You can either exit left or right to the next challenge. I don't remember that being available on the first Arkenoid.

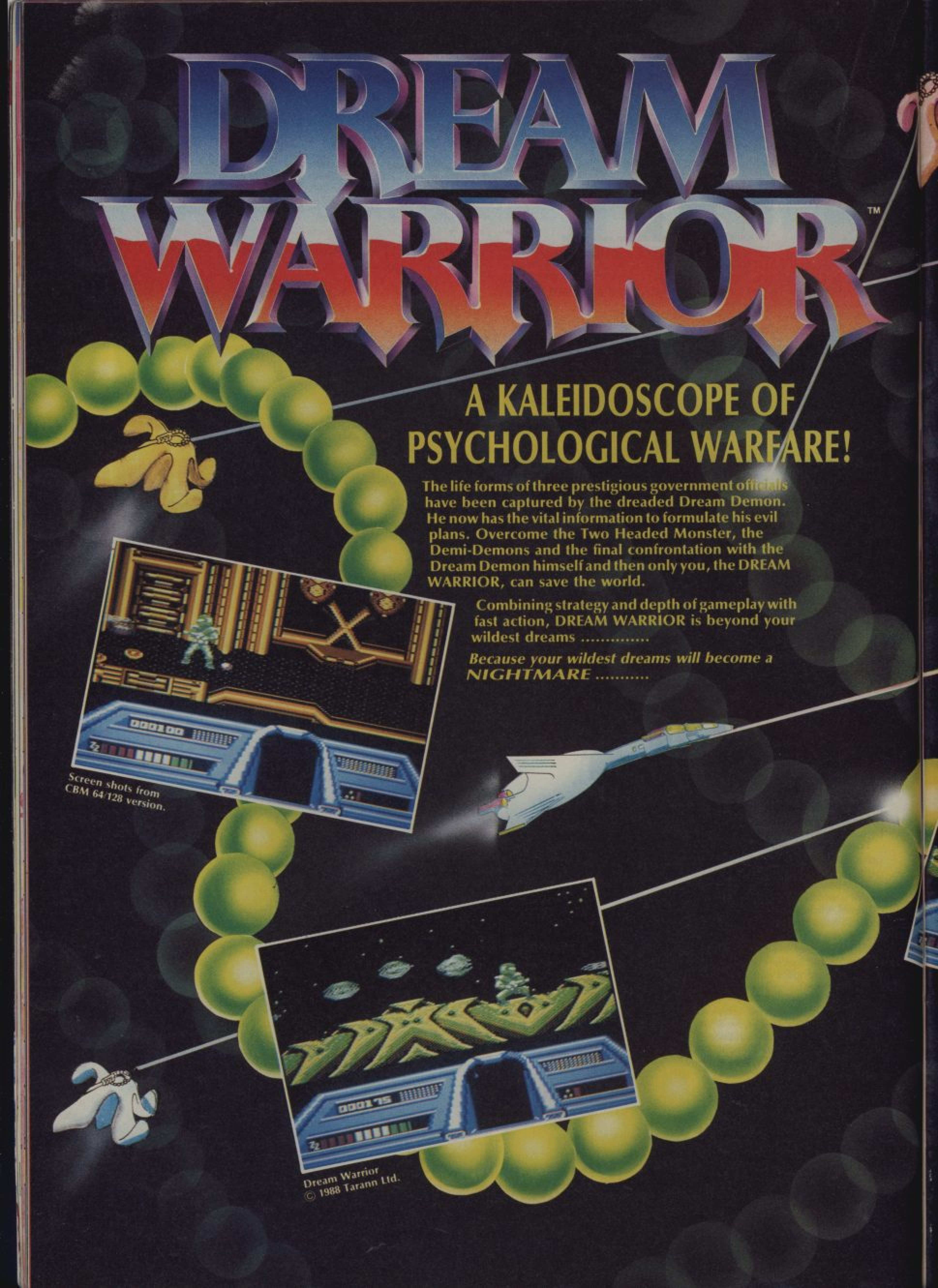
With a product such as *Arkenoid – Revenge of Doh* you know what you're getting. The only question is how well has it been done. The answer with this game is very well. Despite some initial reservations about the slowness of the bat, I kept on playing and playing and playing.

- ► GRAPHICS 8
- ► SOUND 7
- ► VALUE 8
- ► PLAYABILITY 9



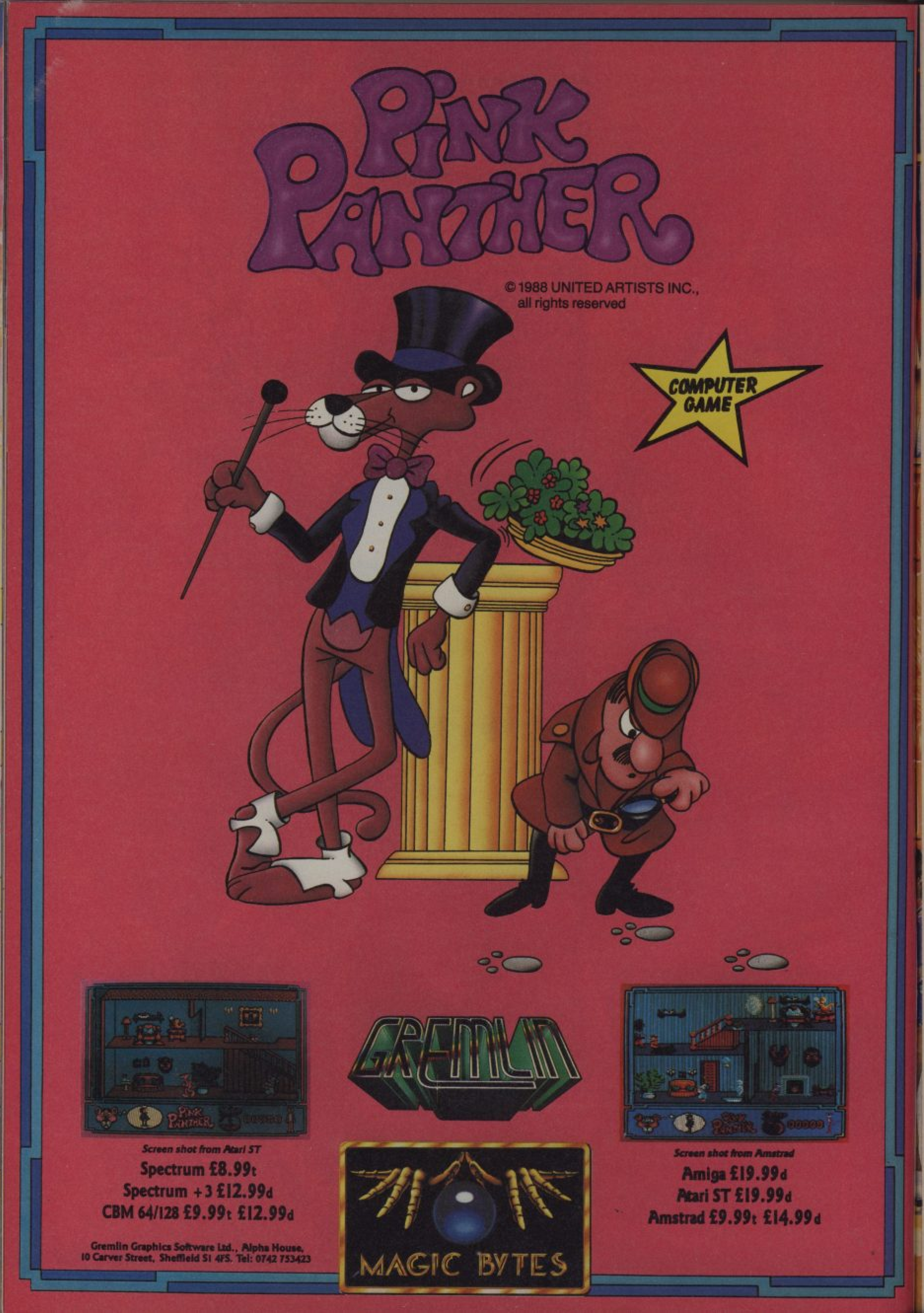
Bug it. ►




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Screen shots from CBM 64/128 version.
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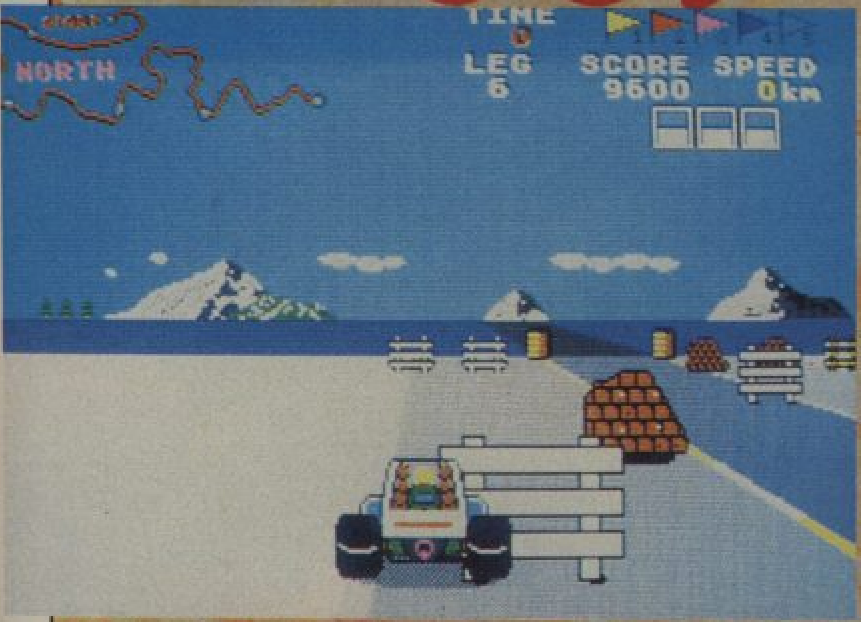


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Gremlin Graphics Software Ltd., Alpha House, 10 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4FS. Tel: 0742 753423
MAGIC BYTES

Buggy Boy



▲ *Bang with a barrier.*

► **MACHINES: ATARI ST/SPECTRUM/CBM 64/ AMSTRAD.**
► **SUPPLIER: ELITE.**
► **PRICE: £19.99 (ST).**
► **VERSION TESTED: ATARI ST.**
► **REVIEWER: PAUL BOUGHTON.**

Hang onto your seat, baby, it's going to be a tough, tough ride. We're going burn a lot of rubber.

Elite's *Buggy Boy* is an Atari STunner. And that, to be perfectly honest, took me a little by surprise.

My first impressions of this Taito coin-op conversion were of mild disappointment. It looked good, sounded good, but somehow played a little slow.

Try as I may, I just couldn't see myself finishing one section of any of the five courses. Time just wasn't on my side.

And then suddenly it all just clicked. All the way it was fun, fun, fun.

I've never been a number one fan of driving games in the past, especially on the home computer. But *Buggy Boy* really cuts it for thrills and spills.

There are five courses to choose from. Each leg of the course must be completed in around 70 seconds. The course is littered with boulders, tree trunks, trees, barriers and walls. So you need to be pretty quick with the steering to avoid these traps. Hitting the boulders will send your buggy head over heels. Bashing a tree trunk head on will send you flying through the air, hopefully landing on all four wheels again. Clipping a small stone could send the buggy up onto two wheels.

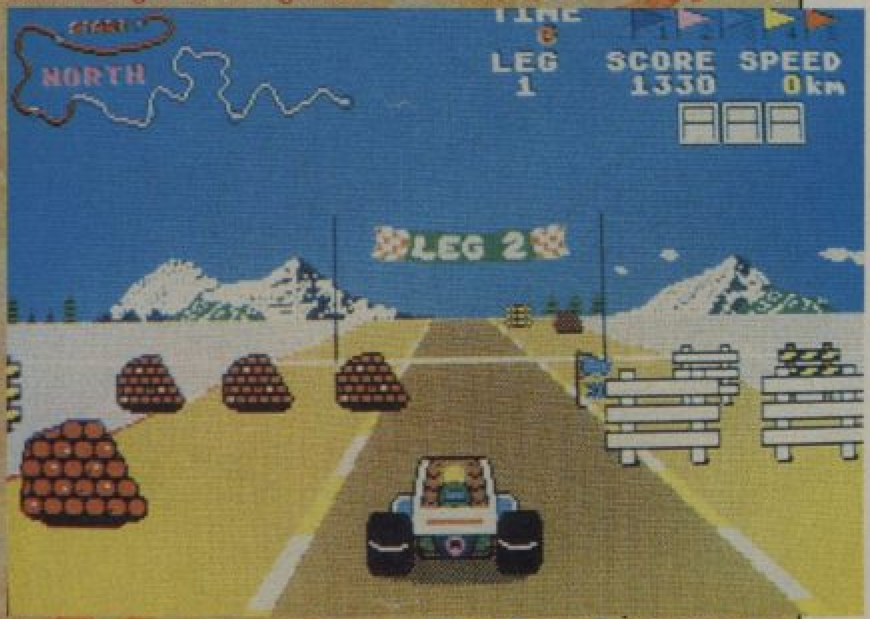
You are disqualified if you fail to complete each leg in time. A time bonus can be picked up by driving through the appropriate flags. But these bonuses can only be used on the leg



▲ *Spills — missing the points flag.*

following. So it's important to get in a good, fast first leg, picking up the most extra time you can.

Meanwhile there are points flags to hit and "score" gates to drive through. Collecting these



▲ *Success — completion of a leg*

flags in the correct order will give additonal points.

The most difficult part of the courses for me were the narrow bridges, getting dunked in the water became very tiresome.

Elite's been pretty quiet on the new games front of late and hopefully *Buggy Boy* heralds their return. A great "comeback" game.

► **GRAPHICS** 8
► **SOUND** 8
► **VALUE** 8
► **PLAYABILITY** 9

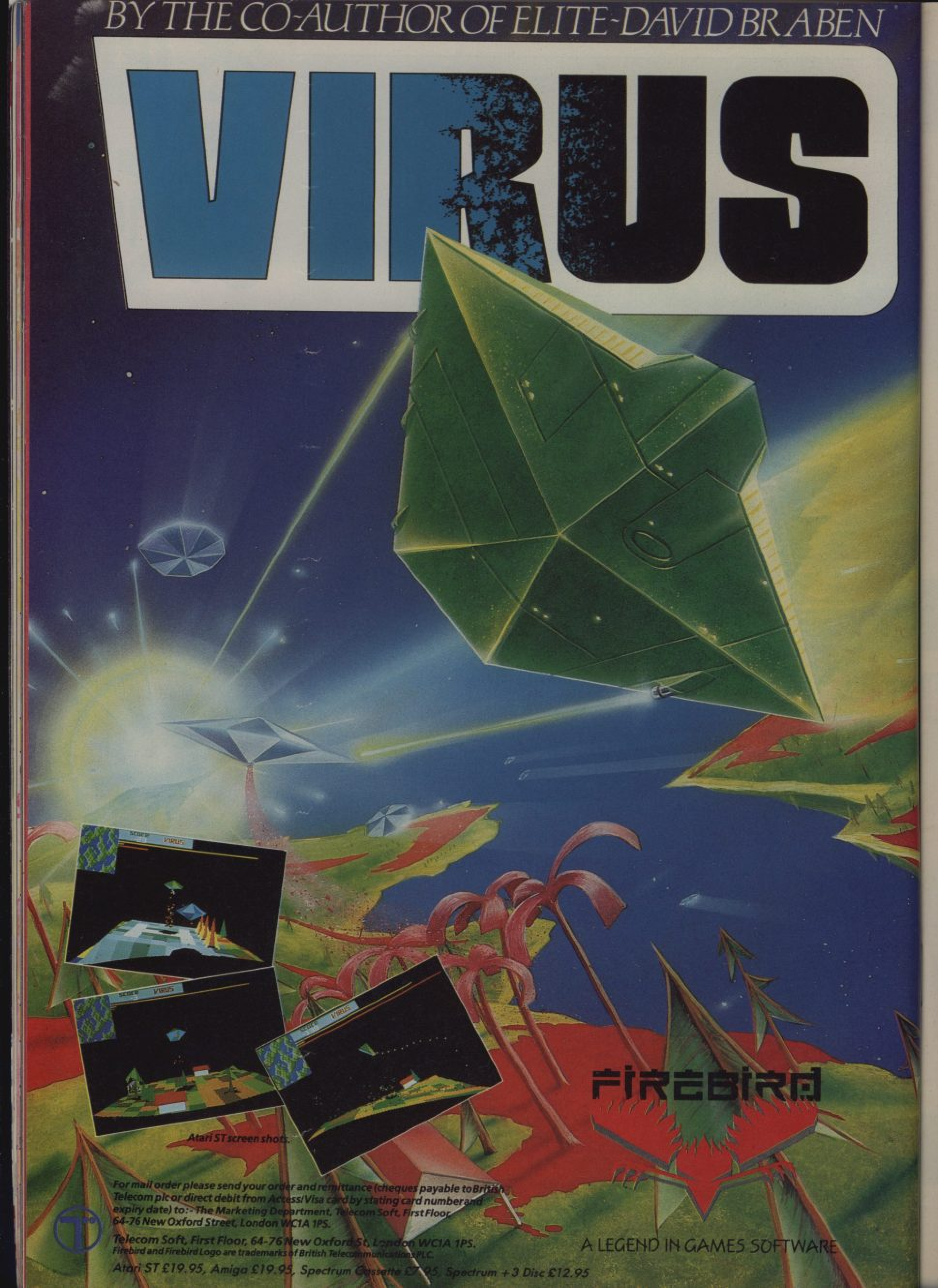
C+VG HIT!



▲ *Full speed down the straight.*

When *Buggy Boy* came out on the CBM64 at the end of last year. Tim gave it a *C+VG* hit, reckoning that in terms of playability it "almost goes off the old *C+VG* ometer".

A *BB* looks really good on the Speccy too, with big, clear sprites, and some clever programming.



BY THE CO-AUTHOR OF ELITE-DAVID BRABEN
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Garrison II

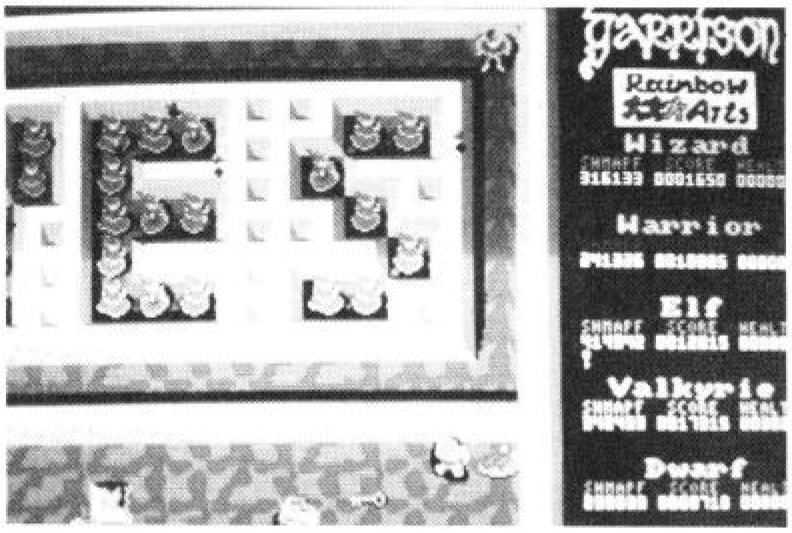
► MACHINE: AMIGA.
► SUPPLIER: GO!
► PRICE: £24..95.
► REVIEWER: DAVID BISHOP

While US Gold may not have liked *Garrison* enough to buy the company, they certainly recognised a winner in the Digital Dreams program. That and the fact that *Garrison* was just a little too much like *Gauntlet* caused US Gold to make the German company an offer they couldn't afford to refuse.

Doubtless bolstered by this success the programmers went away and spent the next five or so months working on the sequel called, with a singular lack of inspiration, *Garrison II*.

This time the Princess Angelique has suddenly fallen ill and only the magic herb which can be found at the very top of a dark magician's castle can save her. The same five character who slogged it out in the original get to do it all over again through another 128 energy sapping levels.

So much for the plot, the question of whether the herb actually exists is rather incidental as I can't honestly see anyone completing this game. If you played and loved the original *Garrison* you are either going to love the sequel, or be very disappointed, both for the same reason. Yes, what Ultimate did with *Knight Lore* and *Alien 8*, and got so roundly criticized for, Digital



Droids—Escape fro

► MACHINES: CBM64/ SPECTRUM/AMSTRAD.
► SUPPLIER: MASTERTRONIC.
► PRICE: £2.99.
► VERSION TESTED: CBM 64.
► REVIEWER: PAUL BOUGHTON.

There is one golden rule: playing computer games should be fun. Did anyone tell that to the people who produced *Droids – Escape from Auren?*

The subject matter seemed quite promising. The game, according to Mastertronic, is based on the current Droids cartoon strip, featuring *Star Wars* heroes R2-D2 and C-3PO.

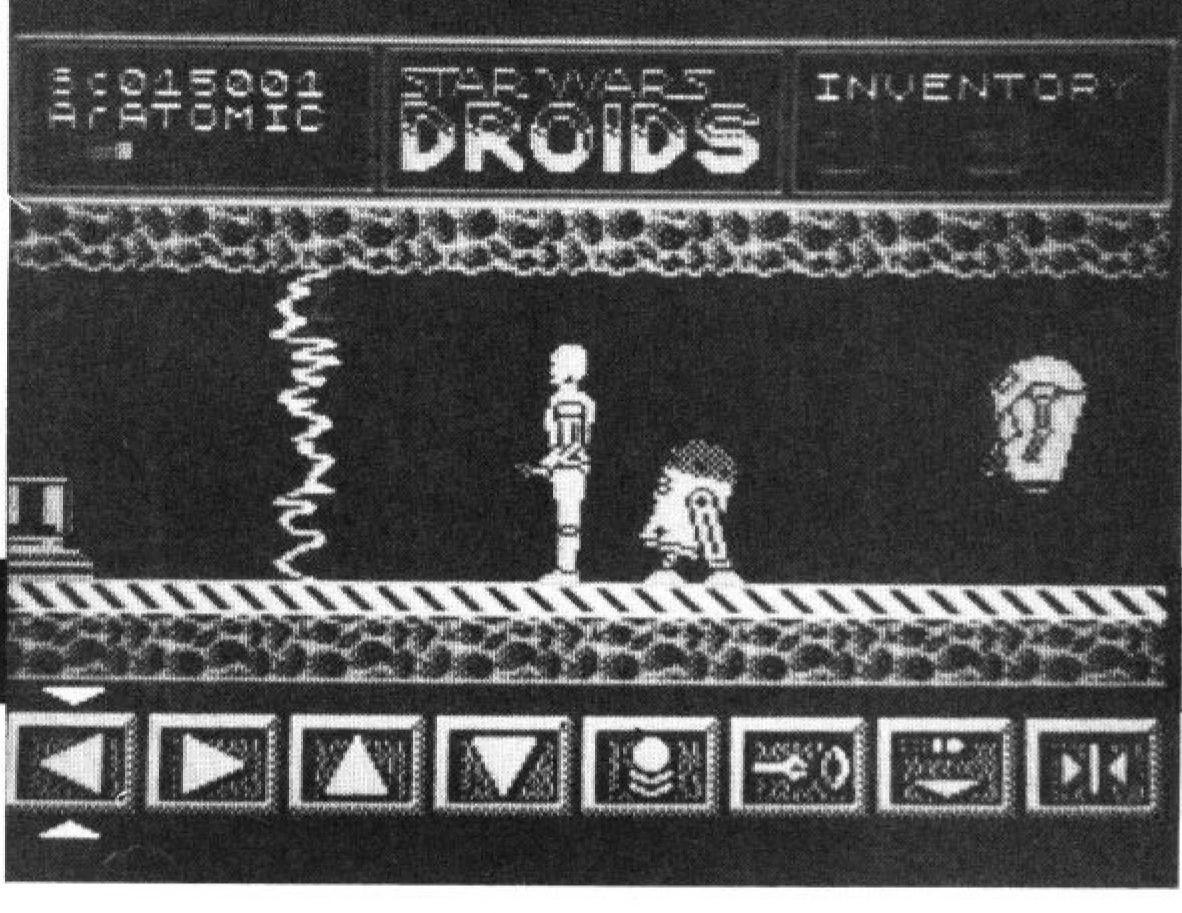
An evil bunch of villains known as the Fromm gang have escaped from a high security prisonj on the planet Ingo and returned to their former base on Ingo's moon, Auren.

R2-D2 and C-3PO are falling to the moon's surface in their shuttle pod. They crash on the surface, and are captured by the gang. Our droid heroes are imprisioned inside the moon's cavernous interior. But R2-D2 breaks out of the cell using his probe arm. The task is now to escape and reach the surface, where, unbeknown to the Droids, Jord and Thall are waiting after following the pod.'

Who are Jord and Thall? I hear you ask. Sorry but that's not explained in the game notes.

You control C-3PO, R2-D2 automatically follows.

The screen is split into two areas, the top two thirds being the playing area and the remainder a series of icons which allow the droid to perform

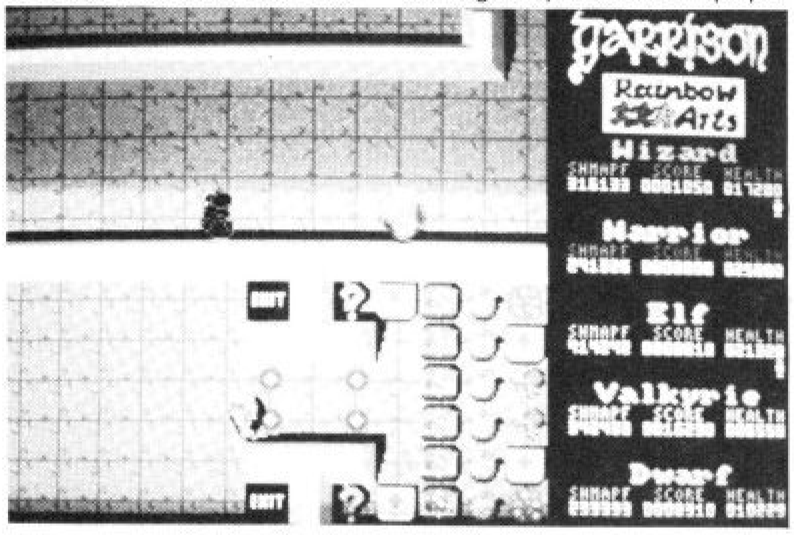


has done here. *Garrison II* is the same game as the original but with new floorplans and a couple of new monsters.

When I say the same game, I really mean this is the same game program. The lazy Germans have kept the same excellent sampled music on the title page and high score tables, the annoying factor of all the characters looking the same unless you have a one meg Amiga, and the character names and statistics. You can even use disc two, the scenery disc, of *Garrison II* with disc 1 of *Garrison I*, or vice versa.

If you already have the original then further reading is not required, rush out and treat yourself to more of the same quality arcade action. If not, read on.

Garrison is not so much a *Gauntlet* variant, but rather a straight clone. Up to five different characters can enter the castle, although only two can be in play at once, each having their own good and bad points. These stats can be altered, for better or worse, through quaffing one of the may portions lying around the place.



However, nothing short of a miracle is going to do the elf any good, who while being very nimble footed, is a complete wimp and rapidly eneds up as monster fodder.

Locked doors, secret doors and breakable doors help bar the way, while keys and teleports aid in circumnavigating them. And all the while the largest and meanest collection of unfriendly sprites every to occupy a dungeon (or tower) are lining up to belt you.

The play screen is not only large, but scrolls fairly quickly and smoothly, even when weighed down by the massed hordes of monsters out to toast you. Some of the swines are particularly nasty, just like the programmers sense of humour with levels entitled Deluxe Pain 2, Summer Games III and Dinner for One.

Death is,as ever,an everyday problem. Not just dying, but the bloke in the black outfit wielding the scythe, ready to chop any regular hero down to size. In your defense there's the smart bomb style scroll, and chicken legs, chunks of meat and first aid kits to repair some of the damage afterwards.

And so it continues, problems and puzzles, oodles of hacking and slaying and magic, sampled effects punctuating the dull ringing noise that permeates the game, and the excellent music when it's all finally over and the quest has come to and end.

If you have already bought *Garrison I* then the question is do you want to pay a hefty £25 for an extra set of levels. If you haven't, then the choice is much easier.

► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	9
► VALUE	5
► PLAYABILITY	9

om Auren

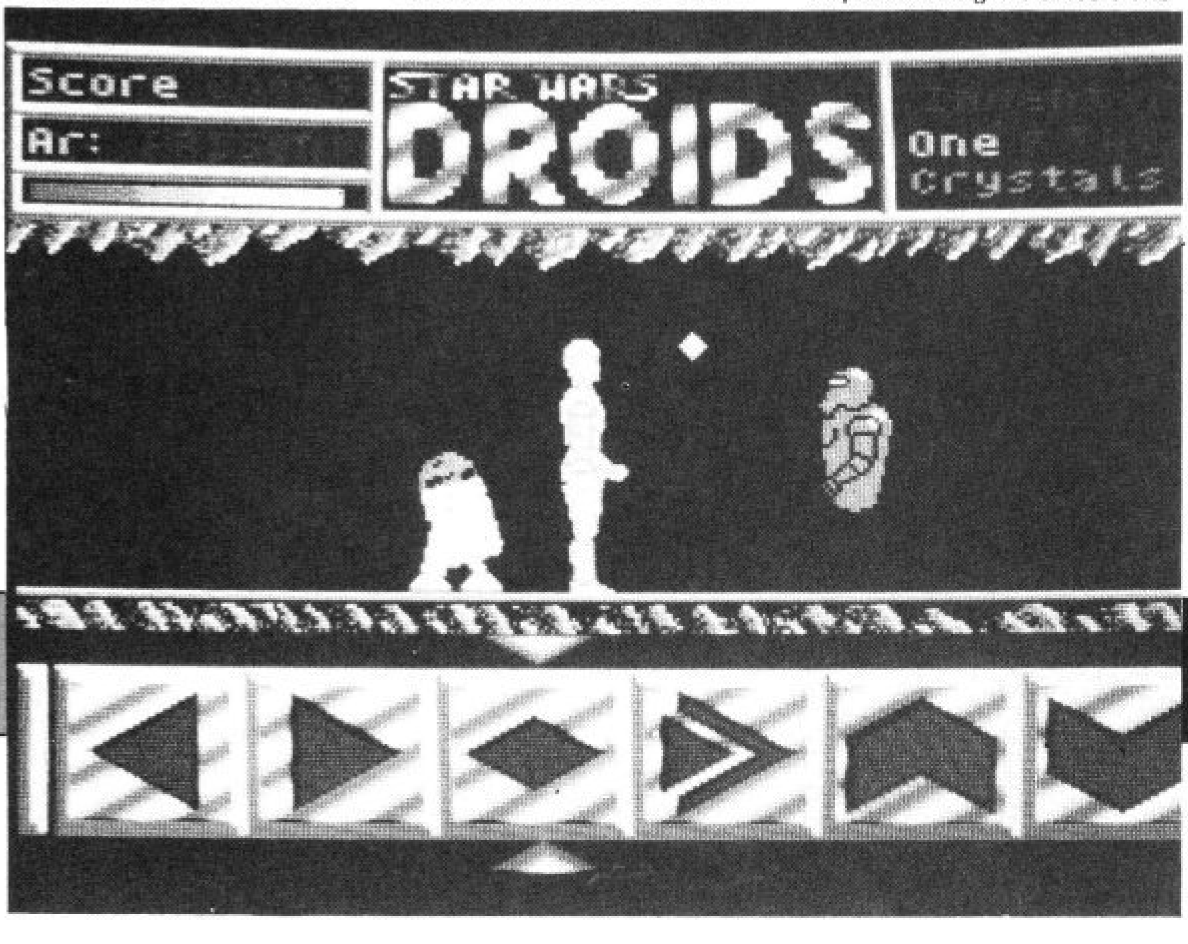
certain tasks. For instance, move left or right, throw a crystal, duck, go up or down in a lift.

Moving around the cave passages there are aliens of varying strength. These can be destroyed by chucking crystals at them.

R2-D2 and C-3PO each face other hazards. There are controllable obstacles which are operated via consoles. Once a console has been taken over, using the appropriate card, the card is destroyed.

The operating of the consoles forms a sub-game. When R2-D2 plugs into one the screen switches to this subgame. It consists of seven coloured blocks, which correspond to the seven octaves, which will blink in a (random) sequence.

You must then re-enact this sequence using the cursor. The harder the level the longer the sequence.



The obstacles include opening and closing rubbish chutes, magnets, sprinklers, sparks and doors.

The main fault of the game lies in the icons. Virtually everything the droid does is controlled by them, even down to moving left or right. The simple act of changing direction becomes exceedingly tedious and turns an already unexciting game into a boring one.

Dreary *Droids* should be avoided.

► GRAPHICS	6
► SOUND	6
► VALUE	5
► PLAYABILITY	4

Droids — escape from Auren

Should now be available across all formats — Spectrum, Amstrad, Commodore 64 — from you favourite Mastertronic.

There are no plans for 16 bit versions which should not cause any great upset, wailing or gnashing of teeth among Atari ST and Commodore Amiga owners.

There is no great variation in play across the formats.

I suppose that means uniform dullness. Buyer Beware.

Crosswize

► MACHINE: SPECTRUM.
► SUPPLIER: FIREBIRD.
► PRICE: £7.99 (Cass).
► REVIEWER: MATT BIELBY.

It's quite bizarre, this one. The first shoot- 'em-up to take place in the air over Coronation Street! You control a little space man who flies along dodging telegraph poles and TV aerials, as well as the prerequesite formations of alien blobs, over a landscape of terraced houses. When I lived in a northern town, life was never like this!

This slight 'innovation', if you could call it that, is the nearest thing Firebird's newie gets to original thought, and even that is soon lost as you enter a more standard system of tunnels and stuff for the later stages. Still, even though this is nothing more than a bog-standard, run-of-the-mill, throw-a-stick-in-the-Virgin-game-shop-and-you'll-hit-fifty-of-them-shoot-'em-up, it's still a pretty good game. Despite all the advances we've made in computer games, for sheer playability all out destruction is still hard to beat.

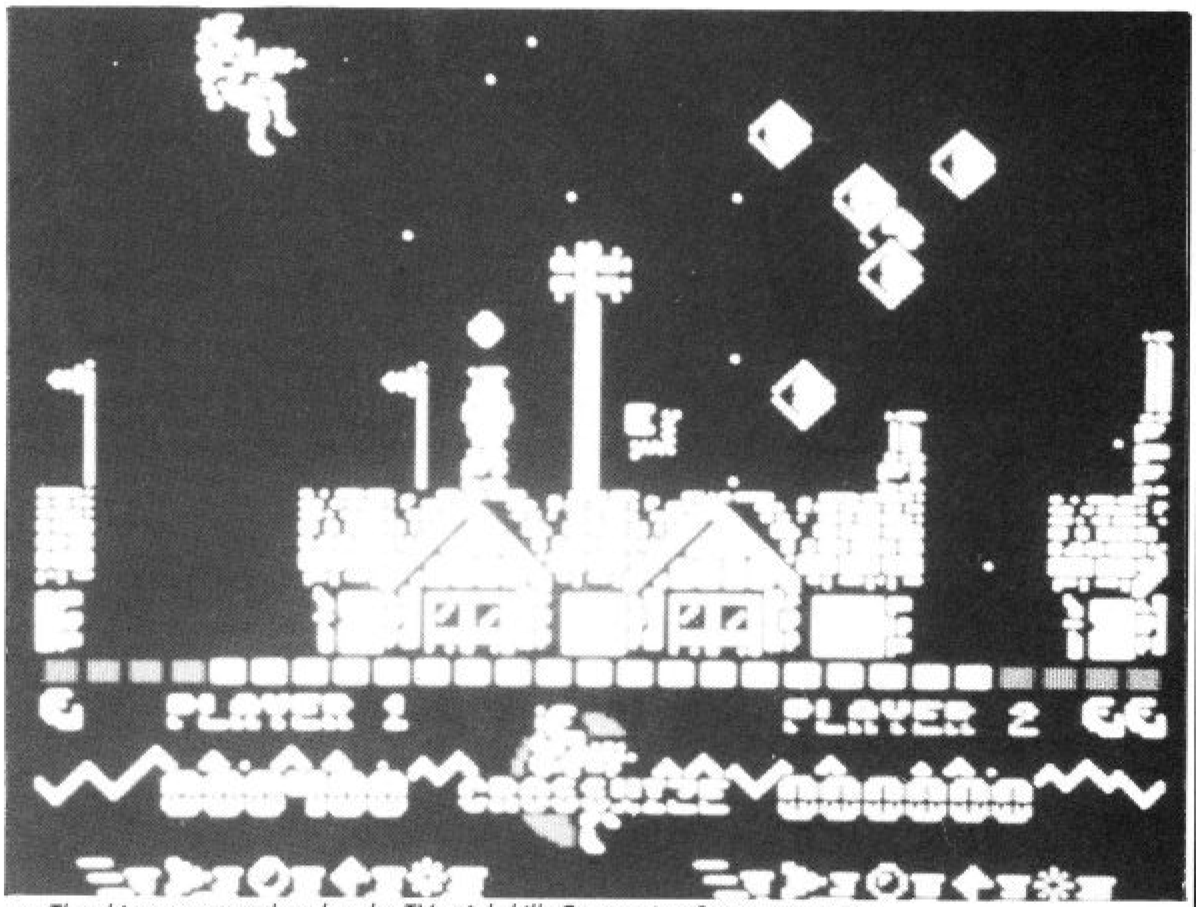
"Destroy the alien waves" is about the nearest the packaging gets to a plot line apart from the info on the back informing us that it is the sequel to *Sidewize*, which we could hardly have forgotten since that was only out towards the end of last year! — and that is no bad thing. We all know what to do, just throw me straight into the action say I. Which is precisely what the game does. There you are on a screen that scrolls quite fast to the right, indulging in pretty fast joystick waggling to avoid the waves of aliens. You start off equipped with a basic high powered laser gun which is what your weapon always reverts to when any picked up extras run out of juice.

Lucky you, there are a couple of E marked energy pods and a weaponry icon floating there right in front of you, which enables you to select one of the higher powered guns from the display at the bottom. You'll need it too, because the bad guys come at you thick and fast, and the proximity of the roof tops means there really isn't so much room to move. Besides being hit by an alien, you die if you touch the roof, or if the chimneys of the otherwise ordinary looking houses belch out an indestructible bullet at you. Hey! Not fair! I thought the native aliens on this poxy backwater planet I'm trying to rescue were on our side!

As with all games of this type, of course, practice makes perfect, and as you learn the various attack formations and how to deal with them, you progress a lot further into the game. One thing to bear in mind is that not only does the screen keep scrolling after you lose a life, but you are invulnerable for the first few seconds after you reappear. What this amounts to is that if there is a particularly tricky obstacle that you find impossible to get past, you can beat it by strategically dying just before it appears, and then using the scrolling of the screen and your brief invulnerability to get past it. Of course, this means sacrificing a life, so it is up to you to decide if it is worth it. In your choice of weaponry you do have a shield which comes into play when you hold down fire to provide the same service, but it soon runs out if you use it at all. Other weapons include Surround fire, bullet fire and a smart bomb, though you need to travel over an icon to get to use any of them. For certain parts of the game though, having a weapon that throws out a wall of five bullets in front of you is almost essential.

You can tell of course, that this is almost your generic shoot-'em-up. Lots of weapons and energy pods to collect, waves of aliens to beat, and, of course, the big mummy alien at the end of each level. Despite the wide range of shoot-'em-ups that exist for all you Speccy fans out there, this one does leave a pleasant taste in the mouth. If you're not the jaded old gamer with a hundred games similar in your cupboard, then pick this one up. It won't blow your socks off, but you could do oh so much worse.

► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	5
► PLAYABILITY	8
► VALUE	7



▲ *The chimneys spew bombs, the TV ariels kill: Coronation Street was never like this!*



▲ *Later stages, and the back grounds get lots more orindary.*

***Sidewize* was originally available only the Speccy, and later converted to the C64. Now the sequel *Crosswize* is out, and though at the moment there is only the one version, who is to say that it will never be transferred to other machines?**

INTERCITY 125.



OUTER LIMITS 125.



AR125: Road Sports. Some 125's are difficult to ride because their engines produce too little power in some parts of the rev range, and too much in others. The Kawasaki, however, delivers power effortlessly, from low down right up to maximum speed. As Performance Bikes magazine wrote when comparing all the 125's "The Kawasaki is in a different class performance-wise. No matter what gear you're in, just twist the throttle and it always responds, better than any other 125".

With its superbly sweet engine, the AR125 is as nippy between towns as it is around town. But Kawasaki performance is much more than speed. It is the ideal balance between handling, braking, economy and power. Super Bike summed it up as a "perfect learner two-stroke . . . handles brilliantly. . . brakes stop the bike on a sixpence . . . unconditionally recommended".

KMX125: Country Sports. The KMX is developed directly from Kawasaki's racing moto-crossers. So when you plough across the fields, you're riding a real thoroughbred.

When a crowd of first-timers tested all the new 125's, including riding them around a Part One Driving Test Course, they voted the KMX top of the lot.

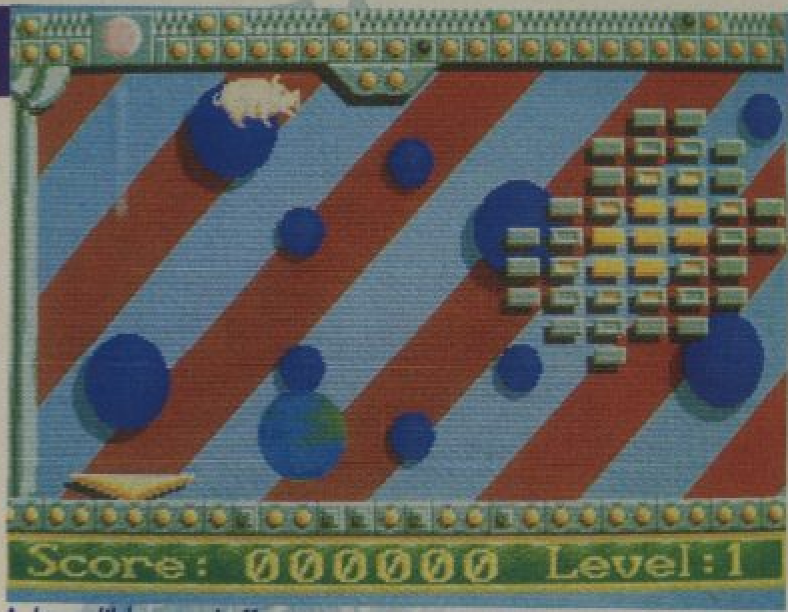
Dirt Bike Rider magazine rated the KMX "the trickest 125 on street or trail". Which is fair comment since the KMX is as brilliant on-road as it is off-road.

The Kawasaki Launch Pad Package. If you buy any new learner-legal Kawasaki, maintain it correctly, and return it in good condition in a year, you'll get your money back (less taxes) against the cost of your next new Kawasaki. To qualify, you have to agree to take proper training. And, if you do, you'll get special discount vouchers on safe riding gear like gloves, boots and jacket.

If you would like a brochure and the name of a Kawasaki Launch Pad dealer near you, send your name, age, and address, to Dept 152, Kawasaki Motors UK Ltd, 748 Deal Avenue, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 4RZ.

WHO CAN CATCH A KAWASAKI?

Jin



▲ *Incredible sound effects.*

► MACHINES: AMIGA/CBM 64.
► SUPPLIER: US GOLD.
► PRICES: £24.99 (AMIGA)/£9.99/£11.99 (CBM64)/£9.99/£14.99 (AMSTRAD).
► VERSION TESTED: AMIGA.
► REVIEWER: CHRIS JENKINS.

If I were to tell you that this is the best game yet for the Amiga, it might catch your interest. If I were to tell you that it's a cross between pinball and *Breakout*, you might be incredulous.

But if I were to tell you that the game's German, you'd push me out of the window. However, all these statements are true; *Jinks* is enormous fun, looks lovely and gets full value from the Amiga's graphics and sound abilities.

Inexplicably, the plot is supposed to be all about space probes exploring alien planets, searching weird installations and avoiding fierce enemies. Forget all that – it's complete hogwash. What you have here, in fact, is a horizontally-scrolling combination of breakout and pinball, where you use a free-moving wedge-shaped bat to bash a bouncing ball all over four levels full of flying pink pigs, teddy bears, spinning drills, bouncing Atari logos, formations of exploding bricks, rotating planets, and light-up bonus targets.

The game starts on the left-hand side of the the level, where the ball drops onto your bat from the top of the screen. You can flip your bat over by pressing the fire button, swapping between the flat and angled sides to control the bounce of the ball.

When you whack the ball off the to right it disappears off the screen, bouncing off objects which respond by exploding, oinking (pigs), squeaking (teddies), boinging (springs) and in some cases scoring you bonus points. As you move the bat around the screen chasing the ball, you'll see some incredible smooth-scrolling multi-plane background effects.

Some of the moving objects you encounter will erode the size of



Firep

► MACHINE: AMIGA.
► SUPPLIER: MICROILLUSIONS/ACTIVISION.
► PRICE: £24.95.
► REVIEWER: BRIAN WEBBER.

Firepower is a new beginning for Amiga software, taking it into a field that only the Amiga can create.

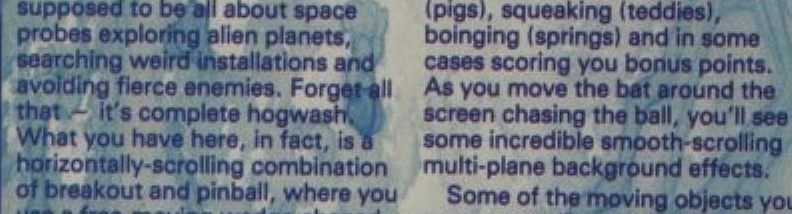
It's a tank battle game where the main object is to find your enemy's flag and return it to your own base. Meanwhile you can be creating havoc by blowing up various types of buildings.

Finding the enemy's base area can be very difficult, as some of the scenarios are rather large. I even got lost in my own base for a while!

You start off with a choice of three different ways to play the game; against a friend on the same computer, against the computer or against a friend via a modem. After your selection has been made a choice of three tanks is given, Scorpion, Shadow 6 or a Marc XJ1; I prefer the Scorpion as it can take the most hits and is the all-purpose tank.

The game starts with you in your bunker; in the two player game the screen is split down the middle to show both areas, otherwise your area takes up the whole screen.

▼*Multiple tank selections.*



Next to your area is some important information, including number of mines, number of men rescued, and the radar display. Now all you have to do is to search and destroy the enemy's flag. On your long journey you will encounter helicopters, gun emplacements, barracks, prison camps, fuel dumps and the flag house.

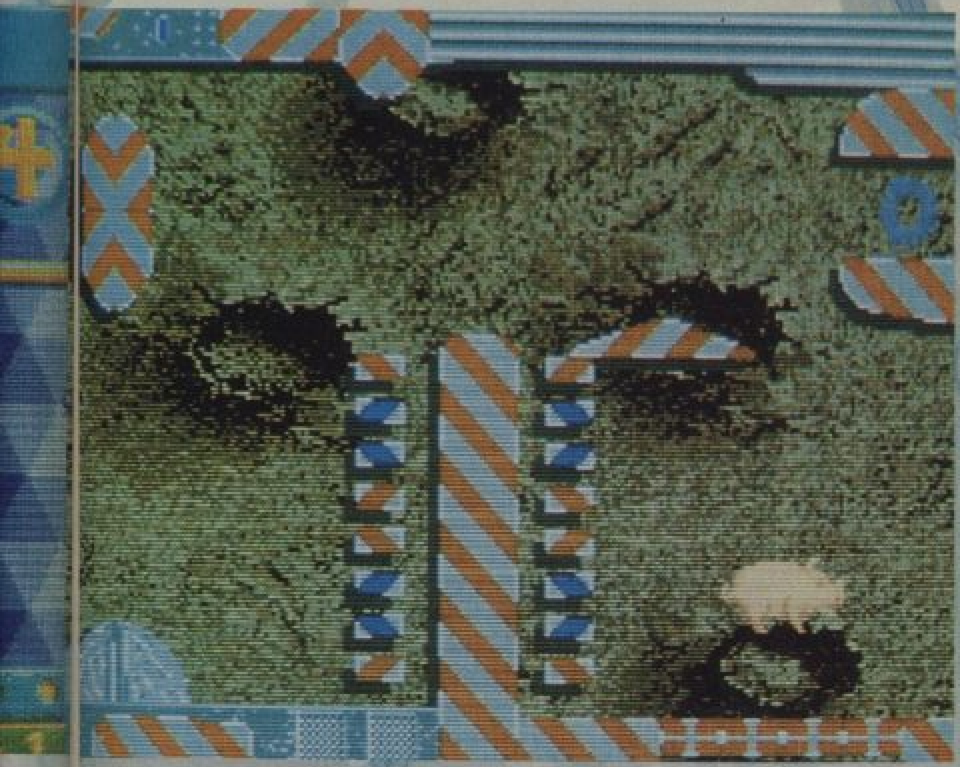
Blowing up a fuel dump will result in an increase of fuel while blowing up a prison camp will enable you to rescue some of your men. If you manage to rescue five men and return them safely back to base you are rewarded with an extra mine. Mines can be used to stop your opponent from getting into certain positions for a time.



nks



C+VG REVIEWS 15



your bat until you lose a life. Others will restore your health, give you bonus points, or, in the case of the ring of spheres at the far right of the screen, get you into the bonus level.

There isn't a single aspect of *Jinks* which isn't brilliant. The sampled jazz music, the incredible quality and variety of sound effects, the brilliant graphic design, the imaginative gameplay and the endless variety are all impressive.

Indeed, the only aspects of this game which don't do it justice are the title, which is pretty meaningless, and the packing, which features poor and entirely inappropriate artwork. Don't let that stop you from burning rubber down to your nearest dealer and demanding a copy of *Jinks* immediately.

► GRAPHICS	10
► SOUND	10
► VALUE	7
► PLAYABILITY	10

As is the case with so many games these days, the C64 version of *Jinks* plays almost exactly the same as the 16-bit models, though of course without the same level of whizzo sound and graphics. We can't really comment on the Amstrad as we haven't seen a copy yet, but it is interesting to note the great numbers of high quality German games coming into the country through our biggest software houses. These range from the relatively unplayable (like the Magic Bytes? Gremlin *Pink Panther*) to the totally brill (check out Rainbow's *Super Gianni Sisters* previewed by Tony T last ish and fully reviewed next time 'round.) With this excellent release as well. Rainbow are obviously a name to watch.

power

▼*Destroy the helicopter.*



Bloodthirsty Amiga owners will enjoy running over enemy soldiers, producing a jammy smear accompanied by a loud splat.

To find the flag you have to look for a specific building which is very heavily guarded, and there can be up to two dummy buildings to destroy first.

The graphics are of very high quality, especially the men running all over the screen. The sound effects are like real explosions, and that splat is just great!

If you own an Amiga and do not rush out and buy this, then you are missing one of the best games around. *Firepower* is setting standards for other software houses to follow.

► GRAPHICS	9
► SOUND	9
► VALUE	10
► PLAYABILITY	10

Firepower **comes out on the C64 and the PC, for those of you that it concerns, during June. There is unfortunately no information available of these just at the mo, but the Microillusions?Activision arrangement gives you loads to look out for at around this time, including Fairy Tale Adventure, Galactic Invasion and the truely bizarre sounding "Romantic Encounters at the Dome", in which you play either a male or female character in a strange singles bar, taking "dramatic risks" in your relationships with the opposite sex". Well!**

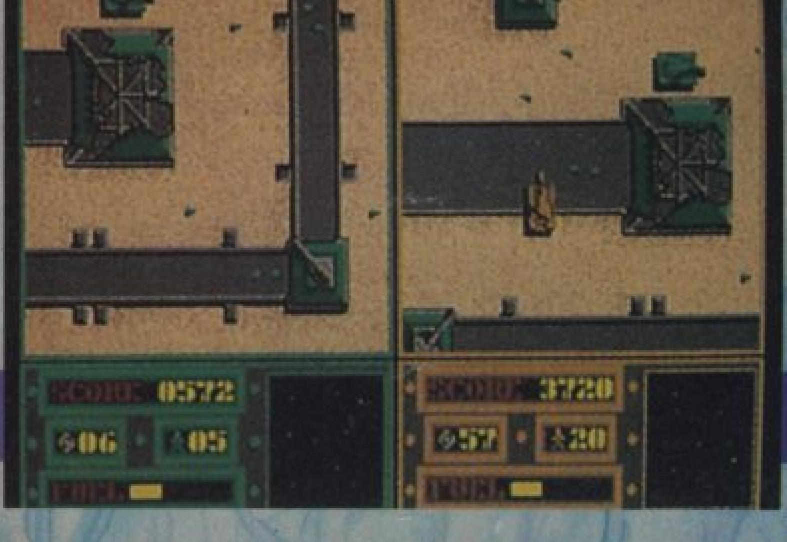
It sounds a little like that other Activision *"Life" game Alternate Reality* in which you had to live your life from births to death, making good, bad, silly or ridiculous decisions about school, careers realationships etc and take the consequences.

It was an interesting concept – if somewhat too American – but spread over three disks it became an expensive buy and probably appealed to only a tiny minority of gamesters.

Which gets us a long way from *Firepower*.

To sum up, it will be a shame if Atari, Spectrum and Amstrad owners miss out.

▼*You must capture the flag.*




ARKANOID
TAITO
COIN-OP
REVENGE OF DOH
YOUR SINCLAIR MEGAGAME
gorgeous visual presentation
weapon enhancements and
addictive gameplay, and you
have Revenge of Doh."
ZZap C64
"Immensely impressive and chronically addictive sequel and takes the Arkanoid format into previously uncharted areas of excellence. A classic."
Your Sinclair.
ZZAP! 64
NOW AVAILABLE FOR THE ATARI ST £19·95
imagine
..the name of the game
Licensed from Taito Corp., 1986
SPECTRUM CASS £7.95 AMSTRAD CASS £8.95 COMMODORE CASS £8.95
SPEC + 3 £14.95 C64 DISK £12.95 AMS DISK £14.95
Adding to the fun and excitement of Arkanoid... All new features include exit choices to vastly increase the screen options, many extra "VAUS" effects, multiple shots and a secret additional alien to contend with. This adds up to the most thrilling reaction game since ARKANOID but with so many improvements you just won't be able to stop playing...
6 CENTRAL STREET · MANCHESTER · M2 5NS · TELEPHONE 061 834 3939 · TELEX 669977 · FAX 061 834 0650

Target Renegade

► MACHINES: C64, SPECTRUM, AMSTRAD.
► SUPPLIER: IMAGINE.
► PRICE: £7.95 SPEC £8.95 C64, AMSTRAD.
► VERSION TESTED: C64.
► REVIEWER: TONY DILLON.

Organised crime gangs rule supreme! And bosses don't come bigger than Mr big. Your brother was sent off to investigate into what ol 'Biggy boy was up to. Unfortunately, he was caught and murdered. You, being the complete nutter that you are, have decided to go, singlehandedly, in his footsteps and try to rid the world of Mr Big.

You race into the city of Scumville, where your enemy lurks. Five different areas wait for you to run through before you finally reach the final confrontation. You begin your quest on the top floor of a multi-storey car park and the aqction starts. Helmeted motorbikers ride at you full pelt across the screen, just asking to be kicked off. A quick flying kick or two is enough to send these bumfaces to a more level confrontation. On each level of the car park, one motorcyclist has a baseball bat. Hit him enough times to knock him backwards, then take it and bingo, Renegade goes whacky-whacky with a bit of wood. The bat scores double damage against opponents. A biker requiring four punches to send him rolling off screen, only needs two hits with the bat, so something definitely worth hanging onto. Defeat all the bikers and you emerge from the car park into a sleazy street. And I mean really sleazy.

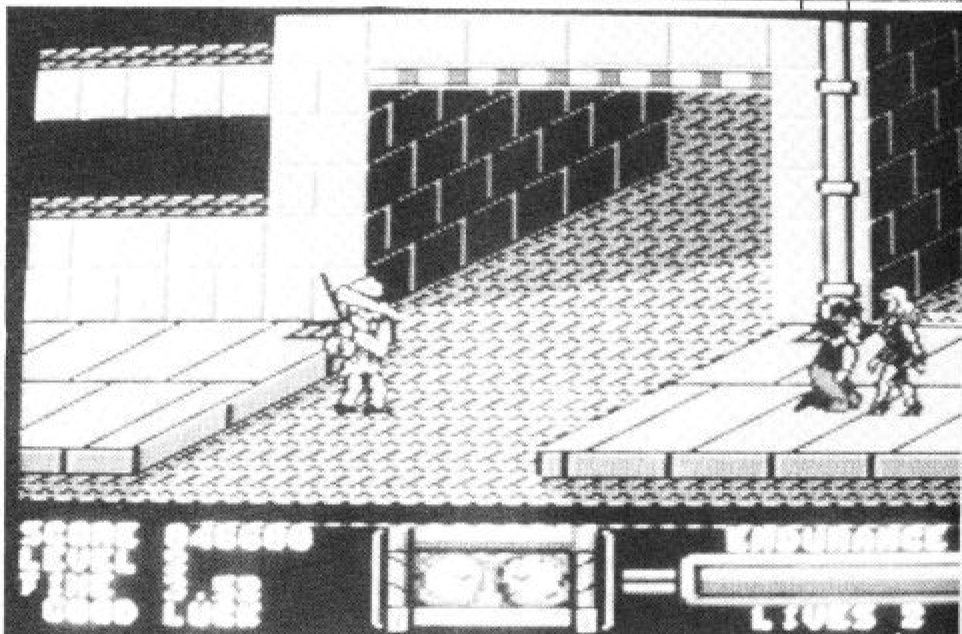
Your assailants on this level are, and this is putting it bluntly, ladies of uncertain virtue and pimps. A nasty touch here is the girl's method of attack. She grabs you firmly by the shoulders, then buries her knee in your groin. The pimp's main weapon is his gun. He'll grope in his pocket for a second, then fire one of his six shots at you. After that, he just lays in with his walking cane. Beat up a few of them, and it's off to the city park we go.

A quick joke. What's the definition of beans on toast. Skinheads on a raft. What's that got to do with the game? Well, in the park, you are assaulted by all skinheads great and small. Dressed identically, the smaller skinheads will jump up at you and nut you in the face, the larger will just punch you. Wade through these, and by now the games getting a little difficult, and you're onto the shopping mall, where you get to beat up the Beastie Boys and some power saws that look like-dogs.

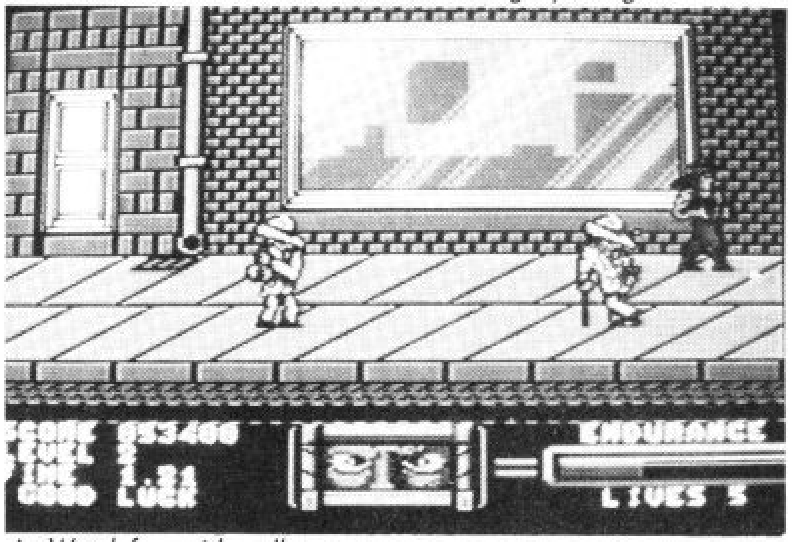
The BBs are amazingly tall, wear padded jackets and very hard to hit. The dogs are tiny, but that doesn't stop them from savaging you, starting from your ankles. Get past them and it's into the bar where you'll find the Big Boss, but only if you can get past his heavies, who bear a striking resemblance to Frankenstein.

The graphics are the best of this type that I've seen on the 64. Crisply portrayed and beautifully animated, the word class is written all over the game. Just look at the screens on this page and you'll see what I mean. Well, really you won't.

The great thing about this game is the animation. Your character doesn't mince like some I could mention, neither does he glide. He BOWLS, and in the most



▲ *Taking a pasting.*



▲ *Watch for a sidewalk set to.*

I'm-a-hard man and-I-know-it way possible.

Mr Big, is fantastic. He comes on screen doubled up and wades towards you, swinging his arms threateningly. He had to bend over, by the way, because he wouldn't fit on the screen any other way. He is huge! Destroying him is just a matter of having a couple of lives left and continually hitting the fire button. Once your defeat him, you see, well, I'll let you find out for yourself.

The sound is varied and very much with the game. Different pieces of music accompany each level, and all are very synth-like. Sound effects are spot on, too, with your aluminium baseball bat making a ping sound whenever it hits body.

Renegade was pretty gross on the 64, and a lot of criticism was given. Imagine has obviously listened to those complaints very closely and come up with a sure fire number one. Easily the best 64 arcade game for ages.

► GRAPHICS	9
► SOUND	9
► VALUE	8
► PLAYABILITY	9

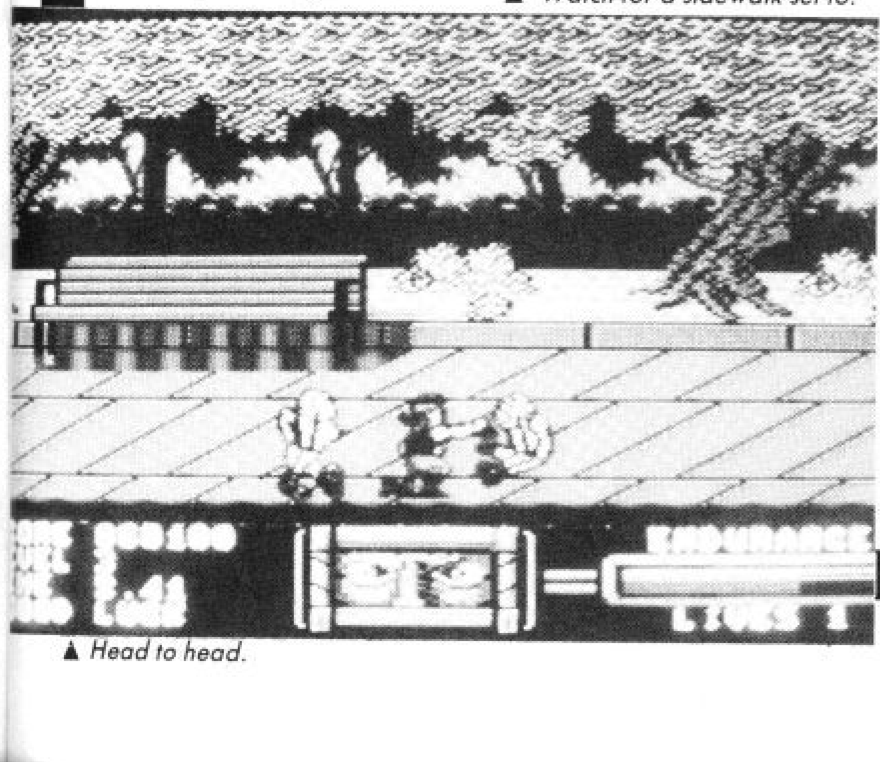
There's a wild, almost scandalous rumour that *Target Renegade's* Mr Big bears an uncanny likeness to Ocean's managing director Jon Woods.

And looking at the tantalising close-up mini screen of Mr Big's mush, there may be something in it.

From what irresponsible source do these malicious comments originate? From Ocean/Imagine's own publicity people, would you believe. Isn't that interesting? We didn't think so either.

Anyway, the Spectrum *Target Renegade* is already on sale (£7.95 cassette, £14.95 Plus 3 disk) with the Amstrad version (£8.95/£14.95) seeing the light of day towards the end on May.

ST owners need not feel left out of all this and the game will be menacing Ataris at the end of June.



▲ *Head to head.*

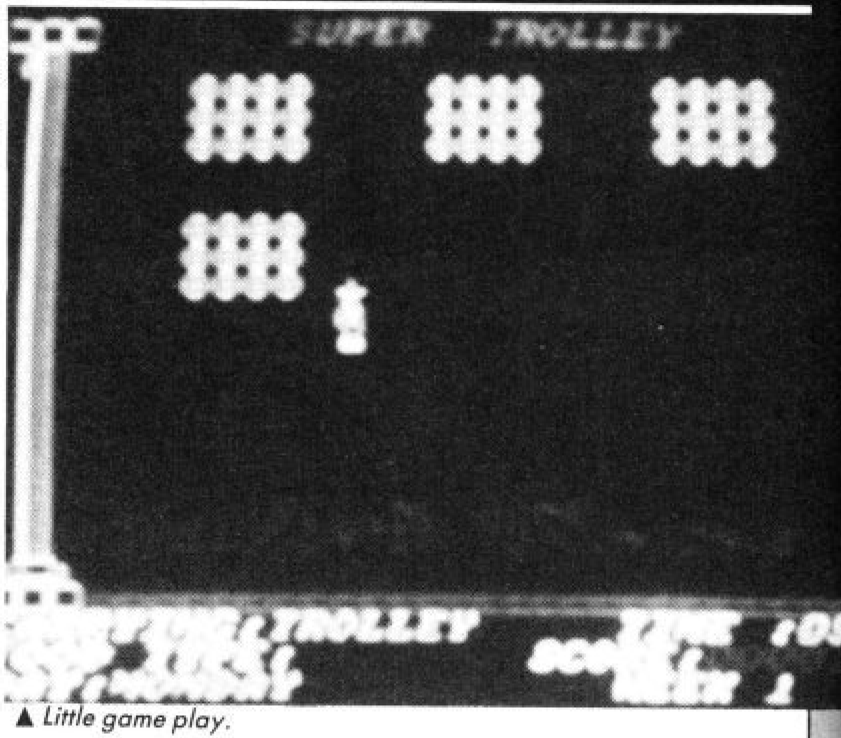
since they're always shown in white. I especially liked the shuffling assistant, the pinch-faces till girls and the crabby old ladies pushing the trolleys into your foot.

Unfortunately, there isn't much excitement in the process of searching for the right shelves, dumping the goods and making your way back to the tills for another trolley and another assignment. You have to avoid bumping into customers and objects, otherwise you'll get the sack. Knocking piles of tins all over the floor is a particularly bad move.

Overall, then, *Supertrolley* is a nice-looking game with just not enough gameplay involved. I'm sure Jim could have fixed something better if he'd made the effort.

- ► GRAPHICS 6
- ► SOUND 4
- ►VALUE 6
- ► PLAYABILITY 5

- ► MACHINE: SPECTRUM.
- ► SUPPLIER: MASTERTRONIC.
- ► PRICE: £1.99.
- ► REVIEWER: CHRIS JENKINS.



▲ *Little game play.*

Super Trolley

A bit of an oddity this. If I've got the story right, this game is the result of a letter to *Jim'll Fix It*. Apparently some little lad wanted to see his game design turned into real code, and silver-haired good fairy Jimmy Savile roped in the amiable Mastertronic guys to do the business. The result, as you'd expect, is pretty naff.

Supertrolley, it transpires, is a game of strategy and memory. You start off as a supermarket dogsbody, and your aim is to win promotion by completing tasks in the alloted time. Your first task, for instance, is to stock up bread, and you have 47 game minutes to do it.

Before setting off you must stick price labels on a pile of packets, which takes a couple of game minutes; then it's on to the game proper, as your miserable-looking flunky pushes a trolley full of bread around the supermarket in search of the right counter.

Despite the fact that the playing area seems to be only something like 8x8 screens, it's probably a good idea to make a map of the shop, since most of the 3-D perspective scenes have at least three exits. Displays below the screen show the objects you are carrying, the food type on the counter ahead of you, the day, week, time and score.

The graphics are cleverly designed to avoid colour clashes, though there's not much variation

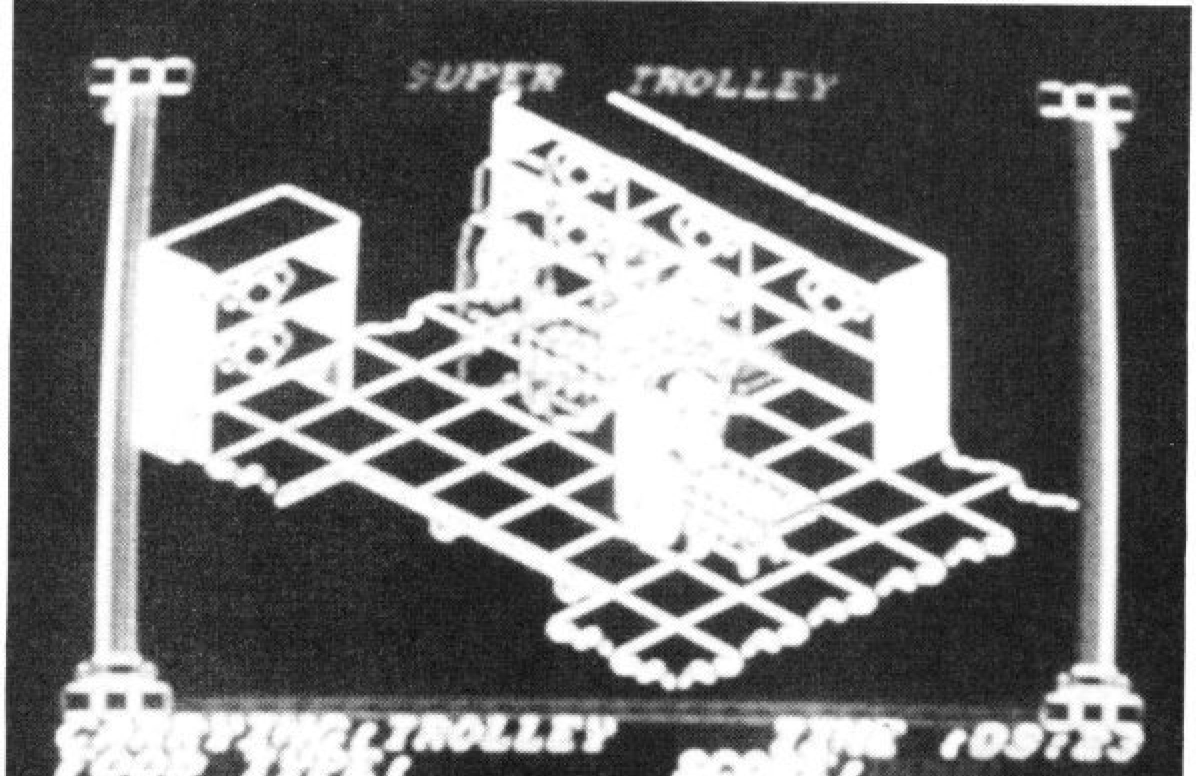
The young man behind *Super Trolley* is eight-year-old Andrew Collett. He wrote to the *Jim'll Fix It* programme back in 1986. However, it wasn't until December 1987 that he heard that he might be included in the show.

Andrew apparently devised the game but the programming was done by the folks at Mastertronic.

The highlight of the whole affair for Andrew was appearing on the show with Jimmy Savile.

Meanwhile, Mastertronic has no plans to release *Super Trolley* on other formats.

▼ *Stocking up your trolley.*



Lee Enfield

► MACHINES: SPECTRUM/C64-128.
► SUPPLIER: INFOGRAMES.
► PRICE: £7.95.
► VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM.
► REVIEWER: TRISTRAM COFFIN.

Well, when you've had a hit game, why not try the same old formula again and see if anyone notices. After all, you won't be the first – and probably won't be the last – to try this tactic to put one over on the punters.

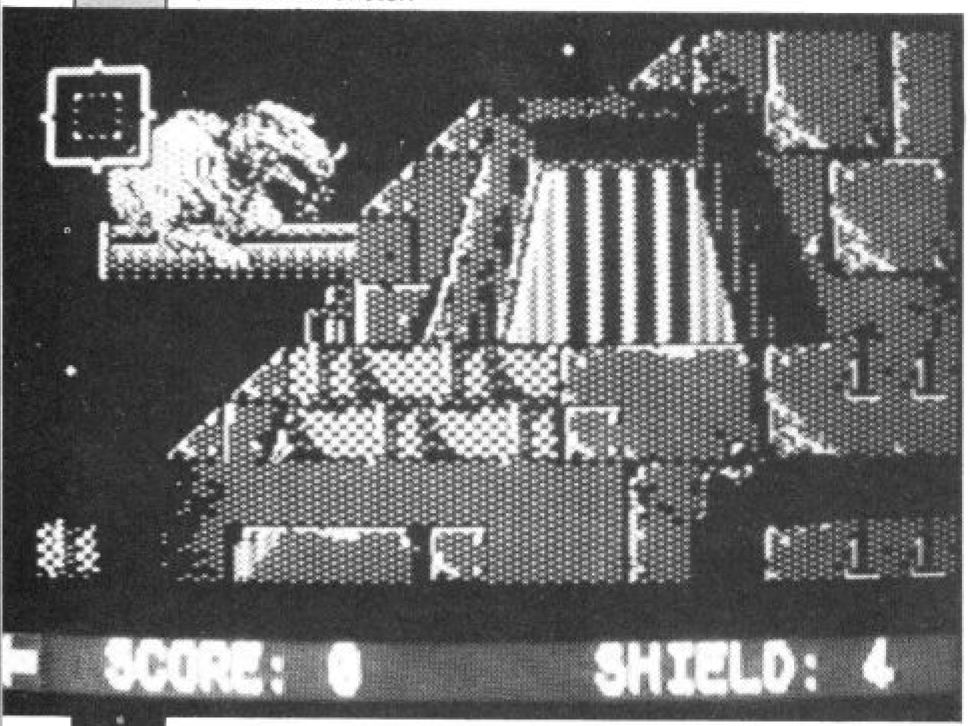
Cynical, moi? You bet buster! But you can't tell me that *Lee Enfield, Space Ace* doesn't have more than a passing similarity to that other Infogrames shoot 'em up, *Prohibition,* which itself was a copy of the coin-op called *Empire City*.

OK, so this "new" release has a different scenario, some tricky extra frills and additional levels, but it's basically the same when it comes to sitting down and playing the thing.

That's not to say *Lee Enfield* isn't fun. I found myself getting quite addicted, despite my initial irritation at the lack of originality.

The *Prohibition,* you need to be quick on the trigger and fast on your feet to defeat the various nasties that come at you.

Lee Enfield is a time-travelling trouble-shooter, or as the blurb would have it, a troubles-hooter!?



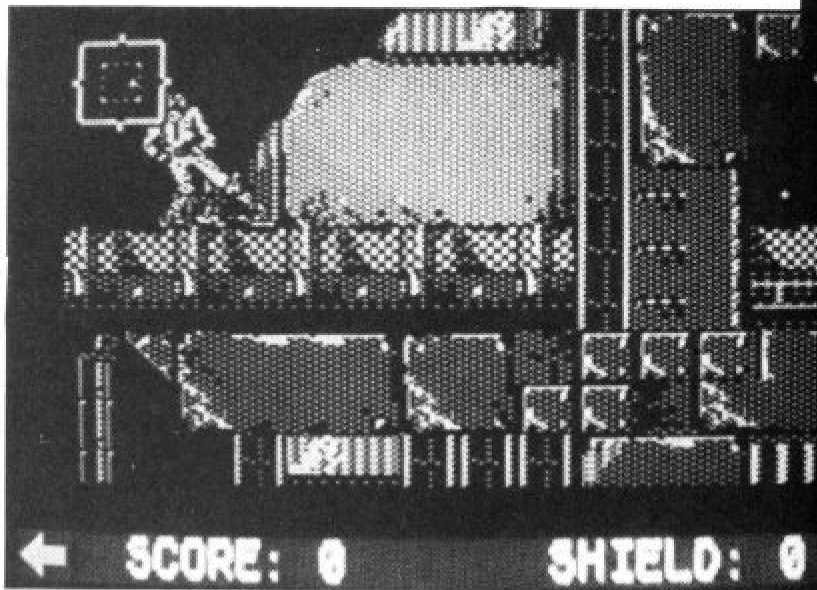
▼ Mash a monster.

Is this some sort of French special agent we ask ourselves? Lee zips aroudn the time-zones dealing death and destruction to baddies where ever they may be hiding. Doesn't that make you feel safe?

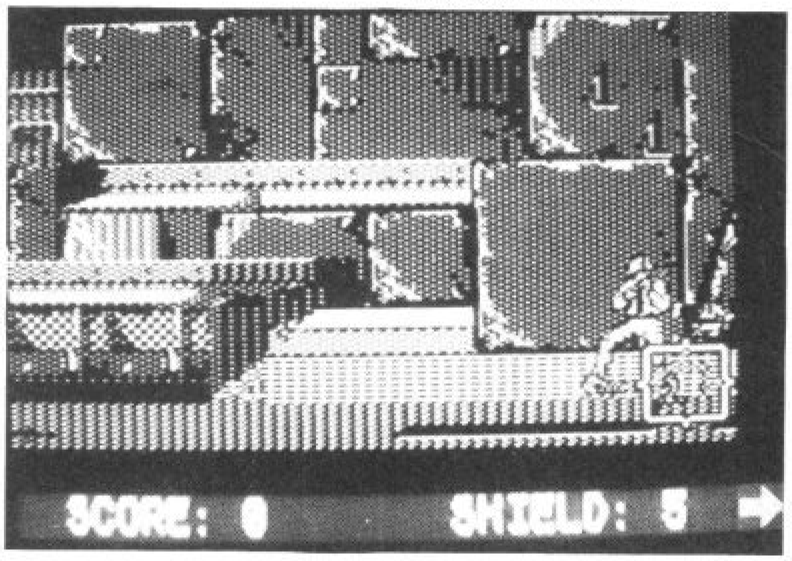
Here he finds himself in the 22nd Century, battling the forces of the mysterious Yellow Shadow in an attempt to rescue his old mate, Bill.

Meanwhile, back at the review, Lee finds himself blasting away at robot-soldiers, alien monsters, sneaky snipers and even abstract apparitions. I know how he feels, I get abstract apparitions after 10 points of Theakstons Old Peculiar too . . .

Load up the game, and instead of a backdrop which conjures up images of Al Capone's Chicago in the roaring twenties, you see a



▲ Spot the bad guy.



▲ React quickly

futuristic Mad Max-style landscape complete with damaged buildings, designer pipework and those nasty minions of the Yellow Shadow ready to gun you down. Quickly moving your gunsight, you zero in on the target and hit the fire-button. Budda-budda-budda! Yeah, got one! At the bottom of the screen a little arrow lights up to point the way to your next target, and so it goes. You get an audible "count-down" between targets – bleeps which get faster as you frantically search the screen for the hidden sniper. Can't find the target? Shame on you. Laser-fire rips into your shields and you lost a "life" before the gun-sight goes "automatic" and proceeds to show you where the enemy who "killed" you was hiding. You'll remember next time, won't you? Yes, after a few sessions you get to know where the next target will be, although the game does appear to throw them at you more randomly than Prohibition did. Oh yes, the quicker you zap the target the more you score.

To move from level to level you must defeat the Awesome Wobbly Balloon, more commonly known in instruction-speak as the magnetic meteor globe. This takes several hits to destroy – and it's hard to get a direct shot at the thing. But if you succeed you see our hero in an Impossible Mission type lift, moving up to another futuristic cityscape where more enemies lurk. The action gets faster the further you get into the game, and the targets get harder to spot.

Graphics on the Spectrum version I looked at were pretty good. Some of the nasties you shoot at are pretty big. The nice Godzilla type monsters were my favourites. Animation is a bit creaky and the sounds are basic Spectrum bleeps and burps.

Lee Enfield isn't a bad game, but it's still just a copy of *Prohibition* with frills and as that should be a budget-price release. Then it would be a real bargain.

► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	4
► VALUE	6
► PLAYABILITY	7

Can't say we're that impressed with Lee Enfield on any version, mainly because we've seen it all before, but truth to tell it would be no great shakes even if no-one had ever heard of prohibition. The general consensus is that it would be a load better as a budget release and, if I may so, with a new title. ither "Lee Enfield" or "Space Ace", but Lee Enfield is Space Ace is just ridiculous.

GRANDSLAM

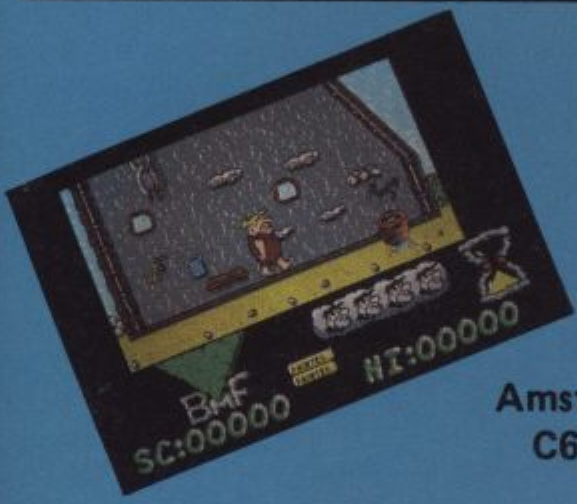
PRESENTS

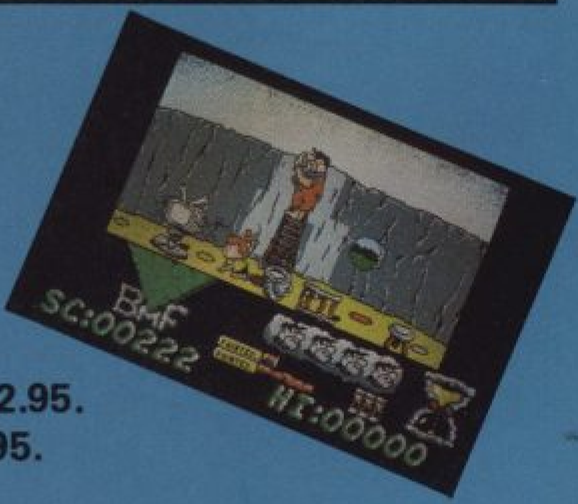
THE FLINTSTONES

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Rolling Thunder

► MACHINES: ATARI ST/AMIGA/SPECTRUM/CBM64/-AMSTRAD.
► SUPPLIER: US GOLD.
► PRICES: £19.99 (ATARI ST)/£24.99 (AMIGA)/£9.99/£11.99 (CBM64)/£8.99 (SPECTRUM)/£9.99/£14.99 (AMSTRAD).
► VERSION TESTED: ATARI ST.
► REVIEWER: JOHN RENWICK.

Rollicking good fun this, one of the better coin-op conversions of recent months and one of the few decent games of its kind on the Atari ST.

A horizontally-scrolling platforms-and-ladders shoot-'em-up, *Rolling Thunder* casts you in the role of Albatross, a secret agent of an international police organisation. Your colleague Leila has been captured by Maboo, evil head of the terrorist group Geldra, and your task is to get her back, at which point I expect it would be time for big snogs.

The game's set in an abandoned warehouse complex, which means plenty of opportunity for leaping around catwalks, piles of crates, heaps of tyres and stairways.

Every so often you'll pass a doorway. Some are labelled as ammunition stores – containing either ordinary bullets or super-bullets which kill in one shot – while others are just useful for hiding behind. Hiding from what, you may ask? Well, the Geldra goons are on the lookout for you, and they'll shoot you, punch you, or throw bombs at you if they get within range. It's best to keep shooting ahead of you to clear the way, and don't forget that you can bound athletically to and from the balconies to get to grips with them.

Though it's wise to wipe out every goon you see, you can't waste too much time, because there's a time limit on each level. On the second level, you have to leap to the top of a huge pile of crates, and on the third even more dangers appear, including flaming lava-monsters and bounding cheetahs.



▲ *Look before you leap.*



▲ *Escaping the villains.*



▲ *Big trouble.*



▲ *Make sure your aim is true.*

While your lifemeter shows the amount of energy you have remaining, one good punch or shot and you're dead, so the best advice is to stay clear of any physical contact. The characters are nicely animated, with your hero assuming an appropriately macho pose as he fires, and the hooded baddies crumpling satisfyingly, especially if you catch them in the middle of a mid-air leap.

The colour scheme is a bit nauseating and the sound effects and music unremarkable, but otherwise this is a well-designed and enjoyable game. There are some nice touches such as the way you can take cover inside a pile of tyres, or leap from obstacle to obstacle over the heads of the baddies.

Although the CBM64 version has come in for a bit of stick, the other eight-bit and 16-bit versions seem to have thaty all-too-rare element of catchiness which makes you want to play just until you've finished the next level . . . and the next . . . and the next . . .

► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	5
► VALUE	7
► PLAYABILITY	8

Rolling Thunder has now been released on all the main formats and is available in the shops now. John is quite right when he says some of the eight bit versions got well and truely slagged. I found the C64 one sinularly tedious and the Amstrad not much better. However, on the 16 bit machines the thing is considerably improved and they have to be the ones to go for if you are lucky enough to have the choice.

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Overlord

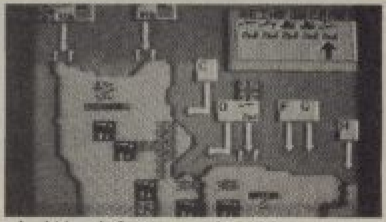
► MACHINE: SPECTRUM 48/128.
► SUPPLIER: CCS.
► PRICE: £9.95 TAPE.
► REVIEWER: STEVE BADSEY.

Described as "based on" the historical *Overlord* by Max Hastings, this is a fairly straightforward one-player game of the D-Day invasion and subsequent campaign by Ken Wright, designer of *Blitzkrieg* and *Napoleon at War*. The game starts with the Allied invasion, and the player, taking the Allies, has a choice of invasion beaches, allowing alternatives such as the Pas de Calais landings to be tested. The game ends when the Allies reach Paris or one side falls below 40 per cent strength. The best feature of the game, and the one into which most effort has gone, is the computerised German defence, which is very good and never predictable.

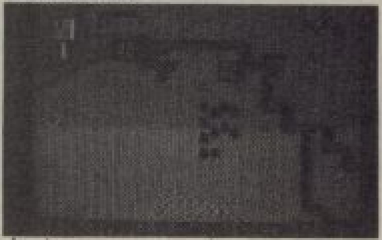
Unfortunately, the game is based on the same playing mechanism as Ken Wright's earlier work. This has now had most of the bugs taken out of it, and gives more realistic combat results, but it can still cause unpredictable movement. It is true that perfect control cannot be achieved in war, but at the strategic level of the Normandy landings there was better control than the game provides. Also, Corps and Army formations are lumped together as having seven subunits each. This means that Second British Army (real strength 12 divisions) is the same size and of lower fighting value than II SS Panzer Corps (2 divisions). It is right to suggest, as Max Hastings does, that some German units were stronger than some Allied, but overall the Allies were far stronger, which is why they won. At all but the easiest of the three levels offered by the game, they are lucky to scrape a draw.

This is an average game, neither particularly accurate or inaccurate, interesting or boring. But every game that Ken Wright has designed has been better than the last one. Some day he may produce something very good indeed.

► GRAPHICS	8
► REALISM	5
► VALUE	6
► PLAYABILITY	5



▲ *Watch for unpredictable movements.*



▲ *Average game play.*

Amiga and ST owners will have to wait until August for *Overlord* to appear on their machines.

The computer simulation of the famous Allied Liberation of France promises many extra features and superb detail in the 16-bit version.



▲ *Winston Churchill and General Montgomery chat with C+VG Review. Steve Bradley (left).*



▲ *Going ashore.*



▲ *The D-Day landings.*

Pegasus Bridge

► MACHINE: SPECTRUM/AMSTRAD/CBM 64.
► SUPPLIER: PSS.
► PRICE: £9.95 TAPE £14.95 DISK.
► VERSIONS TESTED: CBM 64.
► REVIEWER: STEVE.

Pegasus Bridge is still there if you look for it, actually two bridges side by side across the River Orne and Caen Canal, a short way in from the beaches of Normandy. Before dawn on D-Day, 6th June 1944, men of British 1st Airbourne Division were dropped by parachute and glider to capture those two bridges, and destroy the six bridges across the River Dives a short distance away, so preventing the Germans from counter-attacking as the first Allied landings took place. It was a confused and desperate battle, fought by isolated parties of a few hundred men, with the arrival of reserves from one side or the other swinging the decision either way. But by the end of the day the British had achieved all their objectives.

A small unit action like this is one of the most difficult of all battles to computerise. But *Pegasus Bridge* does it brilliantly. This is a one or two player game, and the computer as an opponent can be set for three levels not of difficulty but of aggression – it will use different tactics depending on the choice. So, the player can defend with the Germans against the high aggression of the Airbourne forces if he wishes. The suddeness of small unit action is reflected in high casualty rates and rapid movement, although the game mechanism itself can be a little slow moving.

This is an excellent game of an exciting and unusual battle, and very good value indeed.

► GRAPHICS:	7
► REALISM:	8
► VALUE:	9
► PLAYABILITY:	8

The Amstrad and Spectrum versions of *Pegasus Bridge* are on sale now. No other conversions expected.

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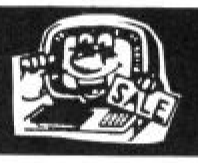
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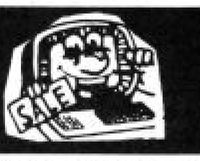
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C+VG REVIEWS 21

Karnov

► MACHINES: SPECTRUM 48-128.
► SUPPLIER: ELECTRIC DREAMS.
► PRICE: £9.99.
► VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM.
► REVIEWER: TRISTRAM COFFIN.

It's weird, it wacky, it's wonderful. That's *Karnov* for you! After what seems a VERY long wait, a decent coin-up conversion has appeared for the Spectrum. You'll be hooked as soon as you load it up — and you won't want to turn your machine off until you've completed the final level.

If you've played the original Data East arcade game you'll know what the concept owes a lot to *Rastan Saga* with a bit of *Ghosts and Goblins* thrown in for good measure. Both those are coin-op classics, and although *Karnov* can't claim the same reputation it's still an extremely playable game — and Mr Micro should get a gold star for the conversions they've done for Electric Dreams.

The Spectrum version may have jerky scrolling and not so hot sounds, but the playability and big colourful graphics help capture the spirit of the original.

The plot is typically Japanese, although the action is supposed to be taking place in medieval Russia. An evil dragon, Ryu has raided the small village where the legendary Lost Treasure of Babylon has been hidden for centuries. To punish the villagers this nasty flying reptile has unleased an army of mutated minions and deadly demons into the countryside around the village.

Returning to the village after years travelling as a circus strongman, our hero Karnov find himself called on to go on a quest to recover the treasure and bring peace and harmony back to the world. The most energetic thing Karnov wanted to do on his retirement from the circus was sit down at the local inn and swap tales of his exploits with his mates — but life often throws things at you you're not expecting, like rocks, spells, bombs, bats, you know the sort of thing.

You start the game on the outskirts of a ruined town. You have to run, jump and climb your way through to the end of the town — avoiding flying monsters, rock-throwing Rock Men, scimitar-wielding arabs and other assorted nasties.

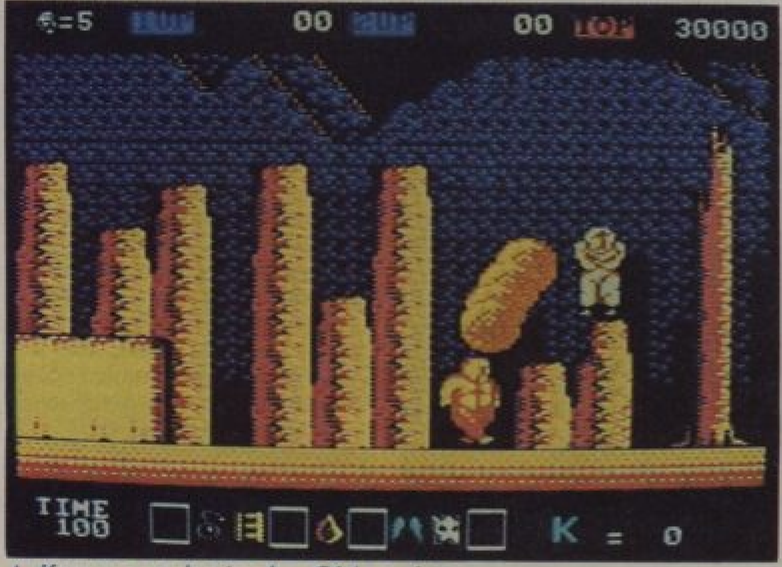
Along the way you can collect useful items, like ladders, extra firepower, magical seven-league jumping boots, bombs and so on. The screen scrolls left to right, and although you can turn around and go back a short way you are always forced to move forward. So watch out for objects which sometimes fall from the skies — it can be horribly frustrating to see an object you could really do with just out of reach.

Items you collect appear in an inventory at the bottom of the screen — and you keep them, even if you do lose one of your five lives. Some items must be used only at specific times during your fight to recover the treasure. Others, like bombs can be used anytime.

But be careful how you use the inventory. You flick through the objects as Karnov moves back and forward on the screen — so make sure the object you want to activate is the one highlighted BEFORE you hit the appropriate key. Many's the time I've hit the activate key with the bomb icon highlighted when I really wanted to use a ladder. And if you don't move fast enough you WILL blow yourself up!

Talking of ladders, you'll need these to reach useful objects higher up the screen or to escape from difficult situations. The boots come in useful for making big jumps over obstacles, and other items will help you fly or swim underwater.

As you've probably guessed, there's a lot to this game. Discovering what does what and to whom is half the fun. The other half is actually beating a level guardian and making it to the next one! The end of each level is guarded by a boss monster which takes a bit of time and strategy to defeat.



▲ *Karnov gets brained — C64 version.*



▲ *Looks can kill — Amstrad.*



▲ *Climb the ladder to success — Spectrum.*

Karnov is a game for map makers and tipsters as well as arcade addicts — it's one of those games which will spawn a thousand maps and a hundred hints.

The nasties who come at you are many and varied — I liked the skeletons on ostriches and the collapsing, fireball breathing, towers myself. But there's lots more to see as you venture deeper into Ryu's fortress . . .

The only criticisms are that it's a multi-load game, but how do you get all this action into a Spectrum without doing that? And the scrolling could do with being a bit smoother.

Those things accepted, *Karnov* should be a hit game if there's any justice in the world. You'll discover exciting action, colourful graphics and addictive gameplay. Join up with the rushin' Russian and you won't be disappointed.

Now check out our *Karnov* map with hints and tips in Playmasters.

► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	5
► VALUE	8
► PLAYABILITY	9

Carrier C

► MACHINES: ATARI ST, AMIGA, AMSTRAD CPC, AMSTRAD, PCW, IBM PC, APPLE MAC, SPECTRUM 48/128, SPECTRUM +3.
► SUPPLIER: RAINBIRD.
► PRICE: (ST VERSION) £24.95.
► VERSION TESTED: ATARI ST.
► REVIEWER: DAVID BISHOP.

One of the most eagerly awaited games of the year, Rainbird's *Carrier Command*, has finally arrived. So how does Realtime Software's latest epic measure up to the promise it showed when we previewed it in our January issue?

The game puts you in command of a futuristic aircraft carrier as you battle for control of a group of 64 islands. The first eight pages of the excellently produced 64 page 'Operations Guide', provide you with background information on the importance of the islands, and why they're about to fall into enemy hands.

It seems that the islands owe their existence to an unusually high level of volcanic activity in the area, which was used for countless underground nuclear weapon tests towards the end of the last century.

A team of scientists, dispatched to investigate the islands, put forward a theory that the enormous energy, trapped in the fault below the sea, could be 'tapped' and used as a source of power. To do this, the scientists argued, each of the islands would need to be 'populated' with power stations and command centres, each maintained by service droids. It was decided that two aircraft carriers, each totally computer controlled, would be built and sent to opposite sides of the group of islands. They would then begin 'populating' each island in turn, gradually working towards the centre.

Just as each carrier was anchoring close to their designated 'home islands', a transcript was received from STANZA, the bad guys, revealing that they had tampered with the control software of one of the carriers, ACC Omega, which was now completely under their control.

If, by 12.00 tomorrow, Stanza don't receive a 15 billion dollars ransom they'll begin to systematically destroy all the islands, thus depriving the Earth of a much needed source of energy.

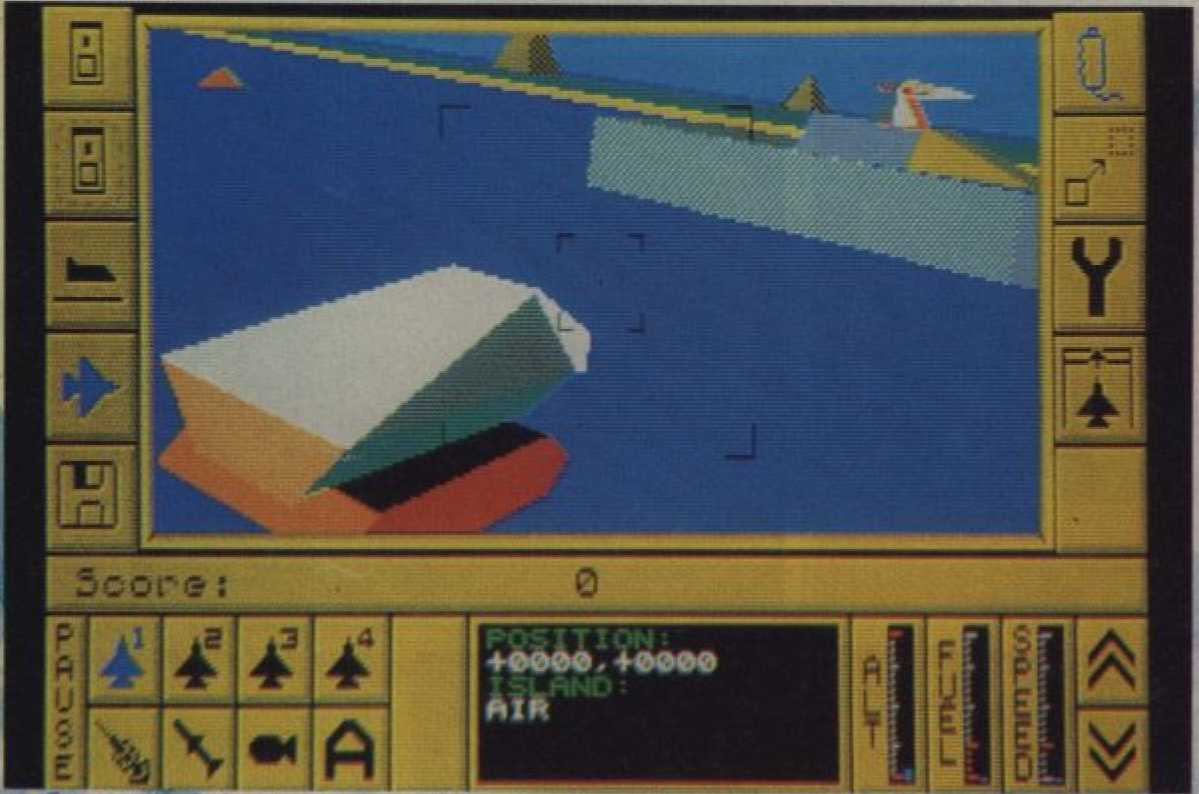
You are given the helm of the other carrier, ACC Epsilon, and are faced with the daunting task of defeating STANZA before they can carry out their threat. To do this, you must either destroy ACC Omega or gain control of every island, including the enemy's home base.

You start the game, anchored off your home island, with a full complement of four Manta fighters and the same number of Walrus Amphibious assault vehicles. In addition to these, your stores also contain various bits and bobs including missiles, lasers, and bombs of all shapes and sizes, not to mention fuel pods, flares, inflatable Passive Defence Drones, and Long Range Communication Pods.

This might sound like a lot of hardware, but you'll soon start running out of fuel and weapons, so a way must be found to produce additional resources for later use.

The answer comes in the form of Automatic Command Centre Builders (ACCBs). These devices come in three varieties: Resource, Factory, and Defence. Once a resource ACCB has been 'planted' and a command centre built, a series of mines, rigs, fuel dumps, and ancillary buildings will be created to store the mined raw materials. These raw materials are then shipped, via the Resource Network, to Factory islands, where they are used in the manufacture of weaponry, refined fuel, and other pieces of equipment required by the carrier and its attendant arsenal.

The Resource Network is a series of underground links between many of the islands. The number of such links joining islands under your control, will determine the rate at which fuel, weapons etc, are transported back to your Stockpile island, from where they can be shuttled aboard your carrier when it's within range. Defence islands differ from resource and factory ones in as much as they are not primarily used for production. Instead, a Defence ACCB will create a squadron of Marauder fighter drones, each armed with heat-seeking missiles. Defence islands are also protected by sea-facing and ground-to-air missile launchers, and contain runways where you can land and refuel your Mantas.



▲ *Commander Bishop launches his Walrus Assault vehicles.*



▲ *A Manta fighter gets the enemy carrier in its sights.*

Command

The movement between islands, the deployment of ACCBs and the subsequent management of your resources, including what should be produced when, are the major strategical elements to the game.

For the more arcade-minded amongst you, your fun will come when you reach the point where most of the neutral islands have been captured by one side or the other. Taking an enemy-held island is not easy, but you'll have a lot of fun getting blasted out of the air a few times while getting the hang of it!

To capture an hostile island, you'll need to first weaken its defences with aerial and sea-based attacks. While the enemy is still reeling from the shock, you can quickly scoot up onto the island in a Walrus and install a Virus program in the enemy's Command Centre Building.

The filled graphics in Carrier Command are nothing short of amazing; faster and smoother than anything yet seen on any home micro – 8 or 16 bit. Air attacks are the most fun; swooping down low and skimming over the surface of an enemy island, threading a path through trees and volcanoes and picking out target buildings can be incredibly invigorating, not to mention extremely dangerous.

Overall the 'Strategy' version of the game will appeal to war gamers and strategists as well as arcaders with a little patience. For those who want a few hours of blasting, there is always the 'Action Game' which immediately plunges the player into a confrontation with the enemy.

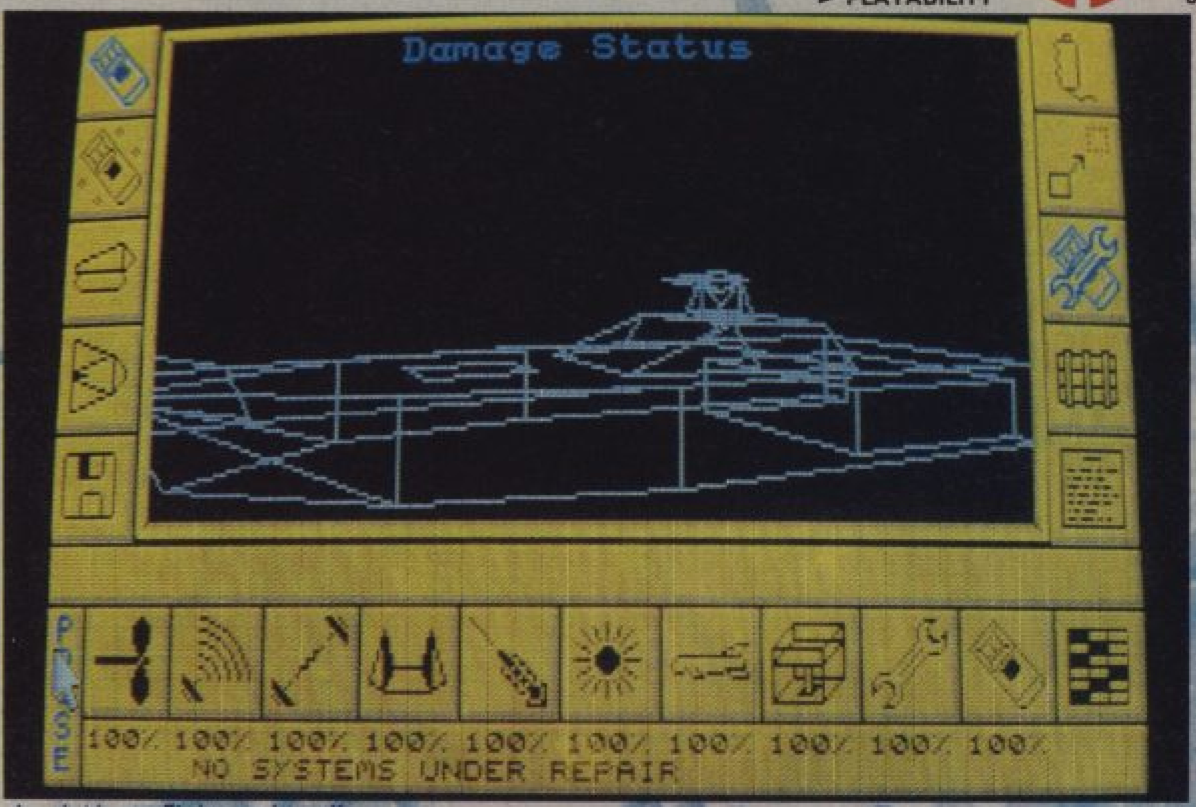
Overall, the gameplay could be described as staccato. There are times when you wish you had another pair of hands, but there are others when the game cries out for some form of of time compression facility.

For example, co-ordinating a combined air and sea attack requires split second timing and complete mastery of the plethora of control icons on the various screens in the game. Yet, in complete contrast to such points of high drama, there are periods of up to five minutes when all there is to do is watch your carrier sail, under Autopilot control, from one island to another, perhaps changing the magnification of the map display to relieve the boredom.

Without doubt, one is fully justified in using the well-worn term 'state of the art' when describing the graphics and the sheer technical wizzardry of *Carrier Command*. As a game, it will not be everyone's cup of tea. A high degree of application and strategical planning will be needed before you even sniff victory. If this doesn't put you off, then *Carrier Command* should give you hours of sophisticated pleasure. If, on the other hand, you're not prepared to work for your play, then look elsewhere.

C+VG HIT!

► GRAPHICS	10
► SOUND	8
► VALUE	9
► PLAYABILITY	8



▲ *A Manta Fighter takes off.*



▲ *Vector graphics scan revolves in centre screen revealing damage.*

8 BIT OWNERS MUST WAIT

Commodore 64 and Spectrum owners are not going to lose out on the chance to fly the Manta Fighters, drive the Walrus Assault craft – and icon-select the dozens of weapons in *Carrier Command*. That's the good news. The bad news is that owners of 8-bit machines are going to have to be patient. And judging from Rainbird's past record on turning conversions around – very patient. The latest word from Telecomsoft is that the Spectrum version should be ready in June – but don't expect to see the 64 version until July.

Amiga owners are more fortunate as this version is the next one to be launched – due for release in May. Sound has been improved on the Amiga – giving it a slight edge over its ST counterpart.

"The Spectrum version will employ a combination of filled in 3-D solid and vector graphics", Rainbird Publisher, Paul Hubbard, told C+VG. He added that the 64 version would employ an overhead view of the action elements on screen. The game designs have modified to benefit from the individual strengths of each machine.

Where the bit versions will suffer is in the number of islands – there will not be as many, though Rainbird are adamant that they can include all the "key play elements of the game" in all of the 8 bit versions.


STRAP THOSE SKATES ON, SCOOP THAT TRASH,
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Obliterator

► MACHINE: AMIGA.
► SUPPLIER: PSYGNOSIS.
► PRICE £24.95.
► REVIEWER: ROY STEAD.

During the Clone Wars, the human Federation needed a crack commando unit – a carefully-selected corp of genetically-altered soldiers. A Suicide Squad.

The *Obliterators* were created.

It's now eight years later, and now a single Obliterator survives. One man to face a deadly peril.

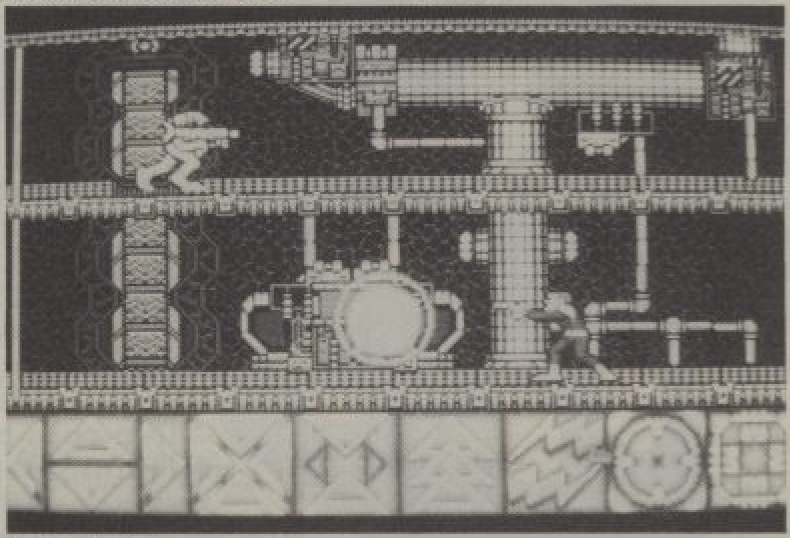
A loosely-allied confederation of hideously-advanced alien civilisations from the Galactic Core – angered by federation 'coercion' – has sent a lone Starship against the entire human Obliterator mission to be beamed, using an untested matter transporter, aboard the alien ship in a last-ditch attempt to save humanity.

As is be expected from Psygnosis, the game comes on two disks and is impeccably presented. There's a beautiful Roger Dean poster, depicting a scene reminiscent of *Aliens* and four title screens to admire as the game LOADs. The controls are similar to *Barbarian*.

Last year's game from Psygnosis and consists of a strip of icons across the base of the screen, accessed by mouse.

The game plays very nicely. It's far easier to play than *Barbarian* was, and even providing a SAVE game option, should you find a Medic unit.

The graphics are excellent, detailed and varied – both for the elaborate and convincing backdrops and for the huge collection of aliens. These come in many forms – including one which crawls across the ceiling, one which drops glowing spheres that break open to reveal crab-like progeny as well as several mounted on robotic horses and which fire missile at you.



▲ *Neat aliens.*

Obliterator shows great attention to detail – I especially liked the idea of having lasers concealed in the walls – and great variety. However, there's little to do except blast large numbers of thingies, and it plays *very* slowly. Thus, adventurers should steer – as should arcade fanatics looking for a *fast* thrill. I fear *Obliterator* will appeal only to map-makers.

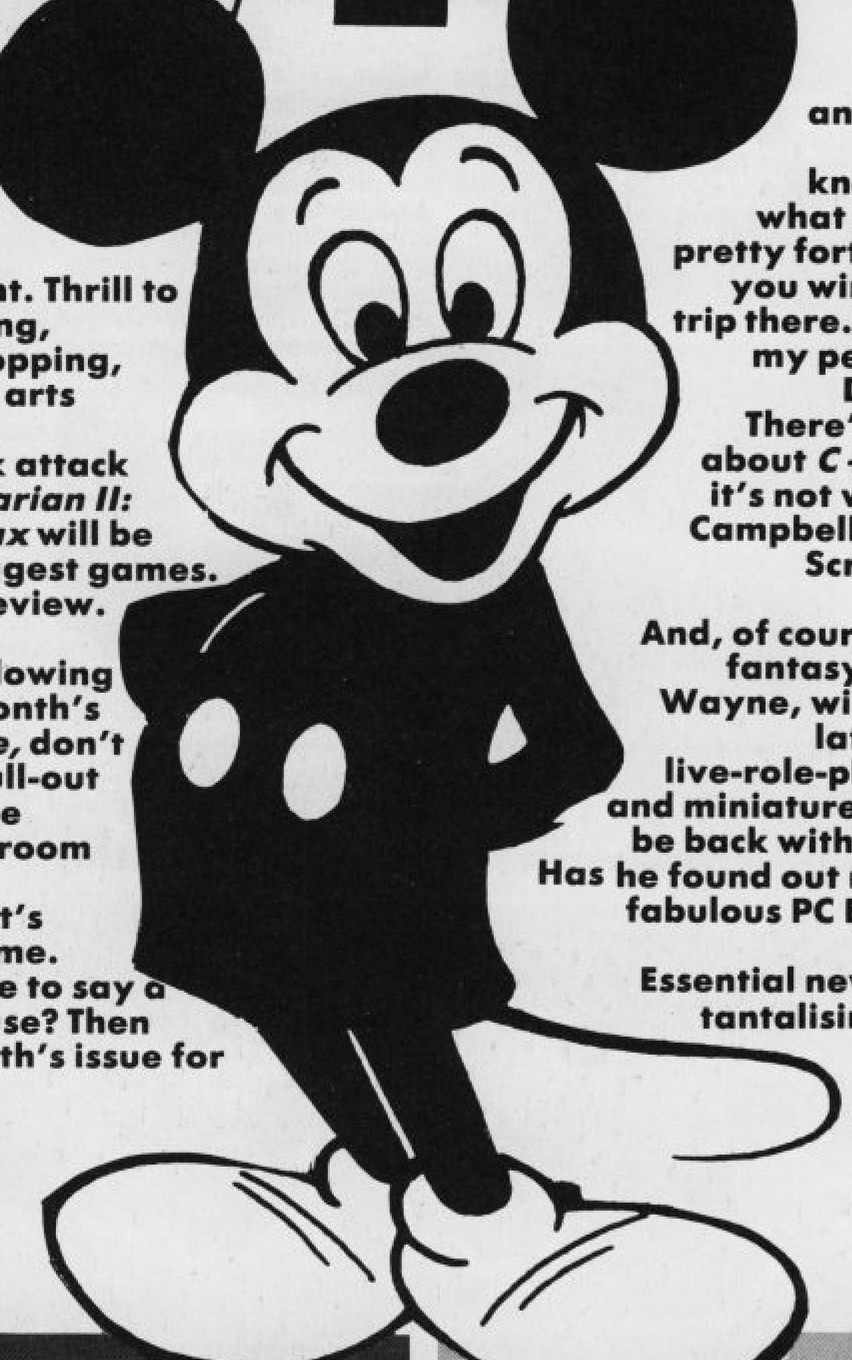
Obliterator is technically excellent, while managing to be brilliantly unplayable.

► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	8
► VALUE	5
► PLAYABILITY	5



▲ *Technically good, but unplayable.*

Next Month



There's no pulling punches in *C + VG* next month. System 3's *The Last Ninja 2* gets the front cover treatment. Thrill to this latest high-kicking, big-bopping, fist-chopping, slick-kicking martial arts extravaganza.

There's also a hack attack in July's issue. *Barbarian II: The Dungeons of Drax* will be one of the year's biggest games. We have a sneak preview. It will slay you!

Shock! Horror! Following the success of this month's trip to the *Gore Zone,* don't miss *C + VG's* FREE pull-out horror poster. Put the frighteners on a bedroom wall near you.

Who Dares Wins. It's mega competition time. Fancy a trip Stateside to say a big hi to Mickey Mouse? Then don't miss next month's issue for further details.

This is my friend Mickey. Oh, didn't I tell you, I met him a few weeks ago in Disneyland.

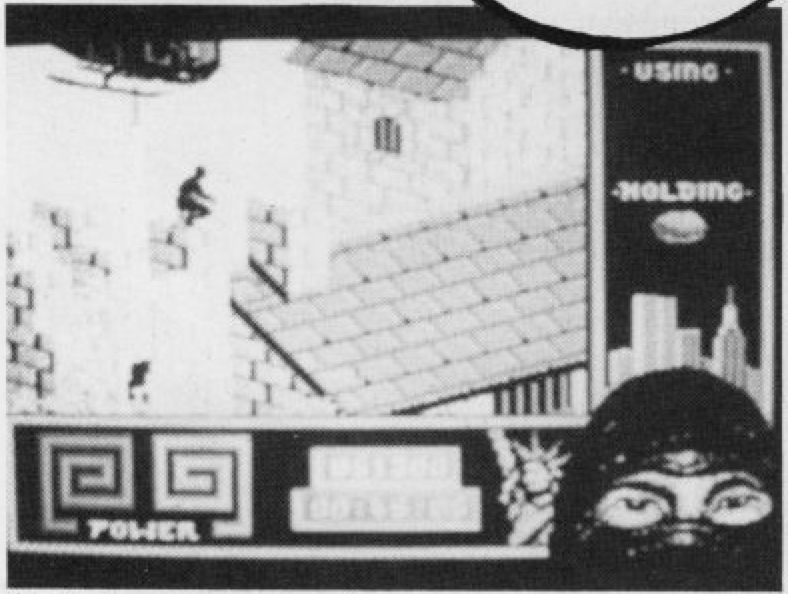
Not boasting or anything – it's just that having been there I know what to go on and what not to go on, which is pretty fortunate for you should you win our super prize of a trip there. If you do you will get my personal guide to Walt Disney's dream park.

There's a wiff of corruption about *C + VG* next month. No, it's not what you think. Keith Campbell checks out Magnetic Scrolls' new adventure, *Corruption.*

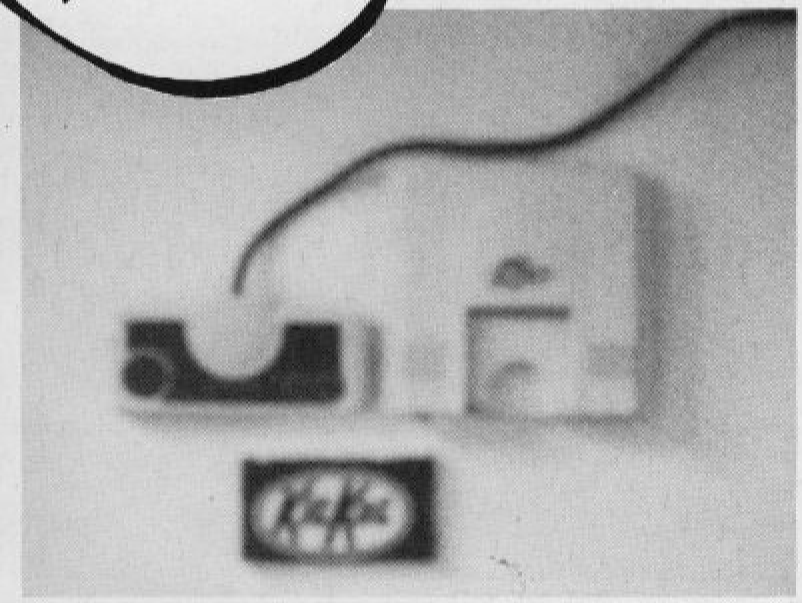
And, of course *C + VG's* very-own fantasy man, the wonderful Wayne, will be conjuring up the latest on Play-By-Mail, live-role-playing, board games and miniatures. Tony Takoushi will be back with The Mean Machines. Has he found out more news about the fabulous PC Engine? Find out next month.

Essential news, brilliant reviews, tantalising previews, fun and frolics.

Don't miss out. *C + VG* will be bustin' out all over on June 15th.



▲ *The Last Ninja 2.*



▲ *Have a break, have a PC engine.*

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Venom Strikes Back

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► PRICE: C64/AMSTRAD £9.99 CASS, £14.99 DISK, SPECTRUM £7.99.
L VERSION TESTED: C64.
► REVIEWER: MATT.

Third time round at producing a *MASK* game, and Gremlin has more or less junked all the distinctive paraphenalia of the license, and served us up with what amounts to little more than a bog standard shoot-'em-up. No more flying cars, armoured trucks or choice of MASK agents: now we get to play only the boss man itself, Matt Tracker in a fetching red jump suit, and quite frankly he could be anybody. Similarly, gone is the exhausting James Bond like scenario, replaced with a simple one line set up – "rescue your son". All of which would seem to add up to the worst game of the trio. Not so.

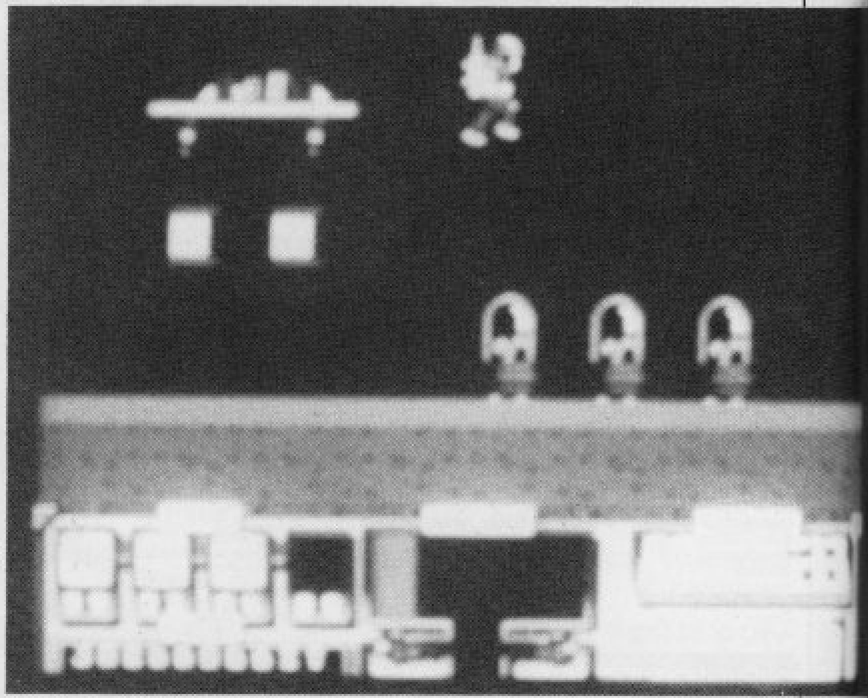
For all their admirable efforts to be true to the spirit of the toys, neither *MASK* or *MASK II* were particularly impressive games. Average graphics and decidedly slothlike playability do not a hit game make, and it is in these precise areas that *Venom Strikes Back* scores. It is nice to see programmers realise that it is how well a game plays that should always be the bottom line, even if it is only on the third attempt.

Apparently none of the MASK vehicles will operate in space, so you as Matt (good name for a hero, that) have to steal a Venom craft in order to reach the moon where your son is held. What this means is that you must bounce your way through a number of levels picking up different Masks that add to your arsenal of weapons. Venom, of course, are well aware of your rescue bid and send a vast array of rockets, missiles, bombs and other nasty things at you. A pretty tough geezer is old Matt though, because you soon realise he can take a massive number of hits before breaking up into five or six pieces and bouncing along the ground. In fact, you can pretty well ignore the majority of Venom weapons – apart from the big ones that come a couple of times on each level – because you are far more likely to die by timing your jump wrong and landing in the water. Oh yes, I forgot to explain that the Venom base looks for all the world like the Lake District or something, with blue skies, piers and grassy bits. Quite why they want to bother with a moon base or kidnapping people is beyond me, when they could be spending their time water skiing or lying in the sun.

Yep, that old jumping is quite a tricky one, and takes some learning. Seems the basic idea is to leave it as late as possible each time, in fact on some obstacles to stand in what amounts to thin air, since the backgrounds don't always correspond too well with where ol' Matt can stand, and where he can't. You also get some very short levels that take place in a high tech tunnel system, which aren't a quarter as hard as the outside bits, since there aren't any tricky hops to perform. The only problem here is to get through the missiles quickly, or else you'll miss the Mask that waits at the end and gives you extra weapons. It doesn't hang around for too long!

One of the most useful weapons to grap is the ability to fly, which you will need to take out of the big homing missile which stands between you and your ride to the moon. Get there, and it's more of the same with a lunar backdrop, though to do so on the pitfully few lives you are given is rather hard. At least there is none of that tedious waiting around through title screens before you can try again, which ruins so many games.

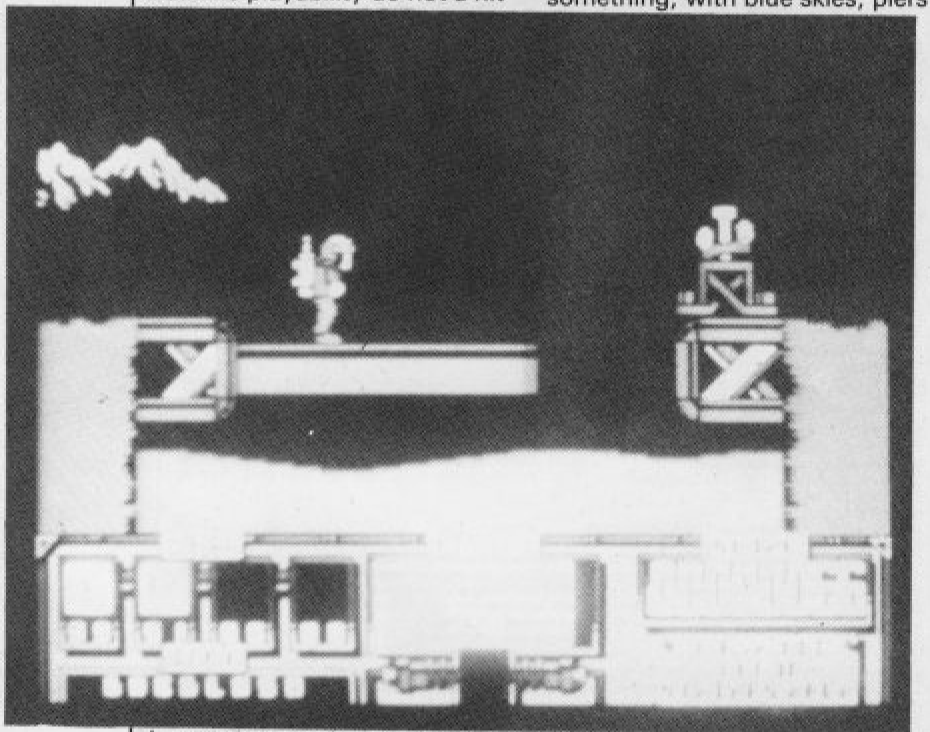
All of the above refers to the Commodore 64 version, which for all its faults and there are plenty, like the over-jolly sound effects, remains one of the most addictive games I've seen on the 64 for quite a while. It's a pity the same does not hold true of the Amstrad, which boasts graphics so different (and inferior) that it could be another game entirely, and which is totally devoid of thrill power.



▲ *The end of level one, and the going gets tricky.*

One to be avoided, I'm afraid, though the Commodore remains superior to many much hyped shoot 'em ups, and is worth nine ninety nine of anybodies money.

The little monotone sprites seem to be given precious little to do as the number of weapons launched at him seems pitifully small, and the jumping sections, which were what made the game for me on the Commodore are conspicious by their absence. The Spectrum suffers, though more for the poorer quality of the graphics than in that it is much less playable or anything. There are no plans yet to go 16-bit, and quite right too: it really isn't enough of a game to carry any overblown treatment easily, just a bit of fun on the 64.



▲ *Into the tunnels, but there's no losing the big spiky stars.*

► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	6
► VALUE	7
► PLAYABILITY	8



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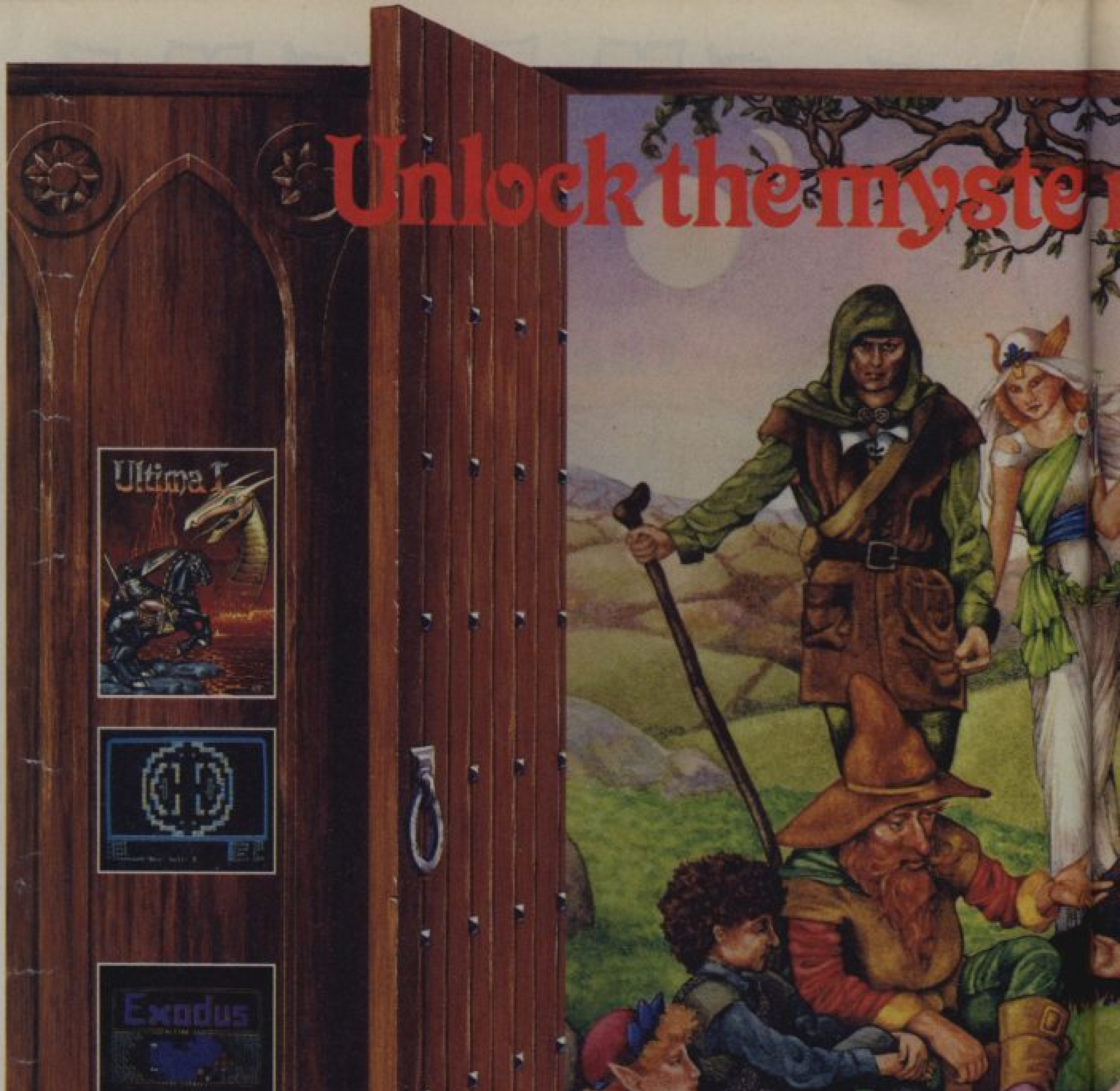
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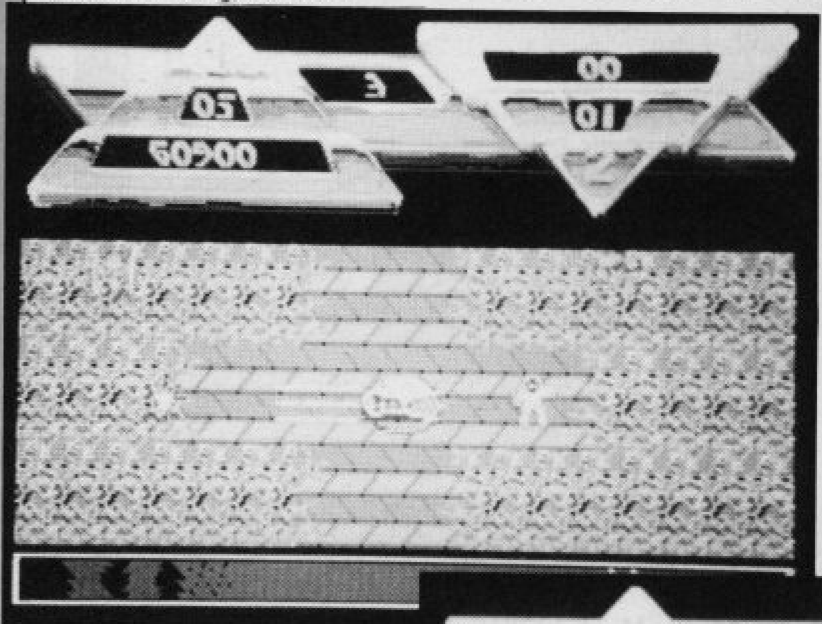
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Return To Genesis

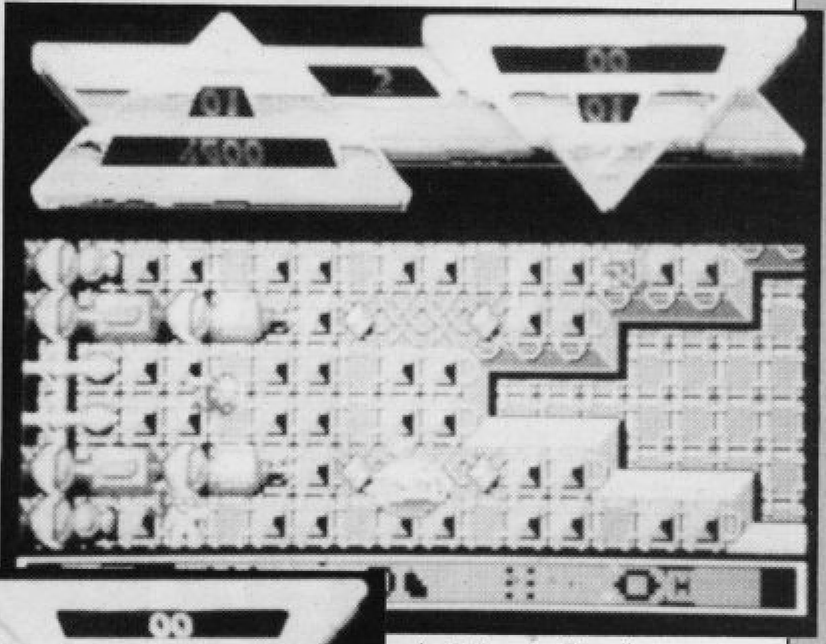
- ► MACHINE: ATARI ST/AMIGA.
- ► SUPPLIER: FIREBIRD.
- ► PRICE: £19.95.
- ► VERSION TESTED: ATARI ST.
- ► REVIEWER: CHRIS JENKINS.

The career of Steve Bak, the programmer of *Return to Genesis,* seems to be a bit like that of Orson Wells. I'm not saying that he should be doing sherry commercials, just that all his good work seems to have been at the start of his career, and since then he's just hacking it out with little regard for originality.

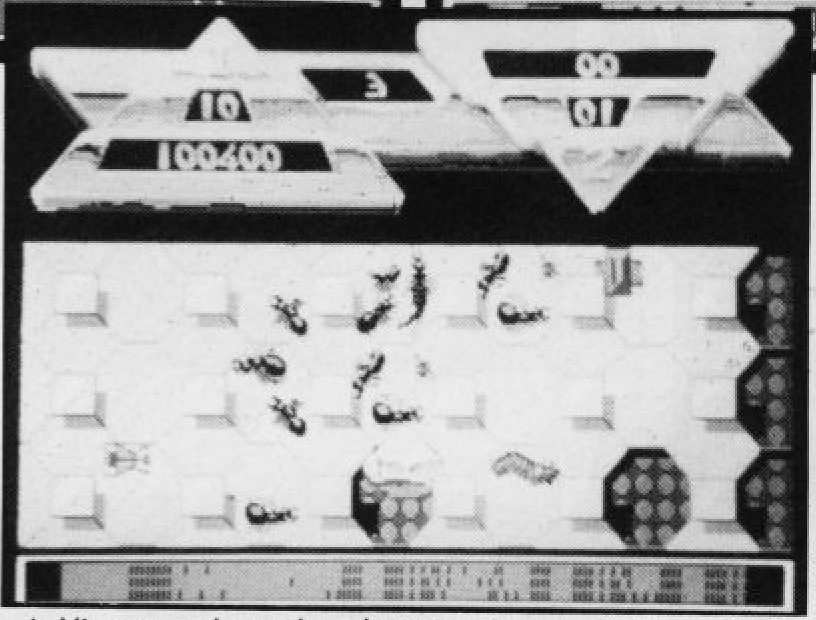
Return to Genesis is a *Defender* derivative, with the added bonus of the fashionable "extra weapon" features. Like Bak's first ST game, *Goldrunner,* it's distinguished by excellent scrolling, colourful design by Pete Lyon, sophisticated music by David Whittaker and sampled speech. The follow-up to *Goldrunner, Jupiter Probe,* was a rather slow and dull vertical scroller, the most annoying aspect of which was the small size of the playing area. *Return to Genesis* has the same fault; the actual playing area occupies only the central third of the screen, so there's not much room to manoeuvre.



▲ *Rescuing a scientist.*



▲ *Return to Genesis*



▲ *Nice ants — shown about the game.*

There are two ways to play *Genesis;* you can race through the ten beautifully-detailed backgrounds, blasting madly and bounding harmlessly off the surface details, or you can take it slowly and carefully, manouvreing around the obstacles and picking up the little space-suited scientists who are the object of your quest.

You have to be careful not to zap these, because they will supply you with extra weapons such as shields, multi-blasters and speed-ups. After picking up a scientist, you can pause the game using the HELP key, examine the nicely-drawn portraits of the brains on board, and select one to help crew your ship.

Clues to the weapons they can provide are given in the accompanying booklet, but not all will be of help on every stage.

More reliable is the scanner at the bottom of the screen. This shows obstacles in black, scientists as red dots, enemies as white dots and your ship as a white square. It took me some time to figure out that the map wraps around; you don't have to fly left to right — if you like, you can fly right to left and tackle the difficult end of each level first. You can also try flying backwards to defend your back.

Technically, *Return to Genesis* is superb; I particularly like the way in which your ship and your enemies can fly through and under some of the constructions, although this makes it hard to keep track of some of the baddies.

The nost annoying thing about them is that they normally attack you from behind, forcing you to execute a smart flip to attack them. This tends to slow down the action, which is never a good idea for an arcade game.

Control is by mouse, joystick or keyboard. Mouse control offers some advantages, but since you can use any control at any time, you could easily swap to joystick for the tricky bits, fighting on until all the scientists are rescued or killed.

The loading screen, showing a cyborg space pilot, is wonderful, and it's a pity that picture wasn't used on the undistinguished packaging. The speech samples are clear — "Return to Genesis" — World cleared" and so on — but sound as if someone is bored with the whole business.

to agree; *Return to Genesis* is a pot-boiler which doesn't really improve on any of the myriad shoot 'em-ups for the ST.

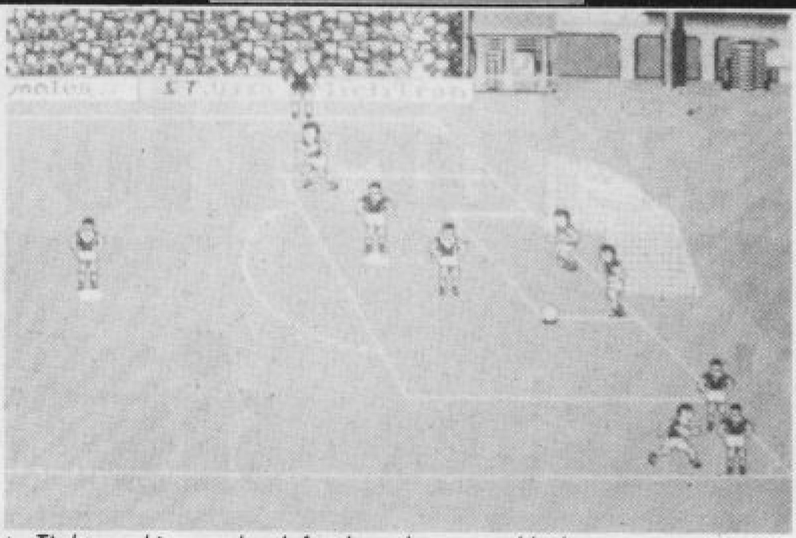
► GRAPHICS	6
► SOUND	6
► VALUE	5
► PLAYABILITY	5

AMIGA VERSION WILL BE THE LAST

Amiga owners can look forward to a version of **Return to Genesis** — if look forward is the right phrase after our slightly luke warm review.

The Amiga version does promise to be slightly better with up-graded sound and effects and music. No 8-bit versions though — this one is strictly for Amiga and ST owners. Elitist — or what?

Meanwhile the search goes on for the game — either on the Atari ST or Commodore Amiga — which will stun us all, just like the Ultimate games did in the Spectrum. Right now that is what the 16-bit machines need. And quickly. 16-bit is the future, we think, but with the PC Engine on the horizon, Commodore and Atari won't have it all their own way.


▲ *Tight marking as the defender takes a goal kick.*

International Soccer

- ► MACHINE: ATARI ST.
- ► SUPPLIER: MICRODEAL.
- ► PRICE: £19.95.
- ► REVIEWER: CHRIS JENKINS.

What do insect soccer fans sing? "Earwig go, earwing go, earwig go . . ."

Hope that bit of hilarity has got you in the mood for the latest ST release from the consistently interesting Microdeal. It may not be a new idea, but it's a first for the ST, and the 16-bit machines have the potential to support an excellent simulation.

The first thing you'll notice is that unlike some soccer games, *International Soccer ST* features a full eleven players on each team. Despite the fact that all 22 men run around frantically, the screen scrolling is pretty good, and on the higher skill levels the action gets very fast.

Before you start you can define various game characteristics. You can set the shirt colour for both teams, choose from a selection of play formations, set the ground conditions to dry or wet, and set the wind to blow left, right or not at all.

The wind level is equivalent to a gale, so this function is pretty useless. You can also opt to play at hight, which simply makes the screen darker and adds shadows to the players. Game length can be 10, 20, 60 or 90 minutes; there doesn't seem to be an option to quit during a game.

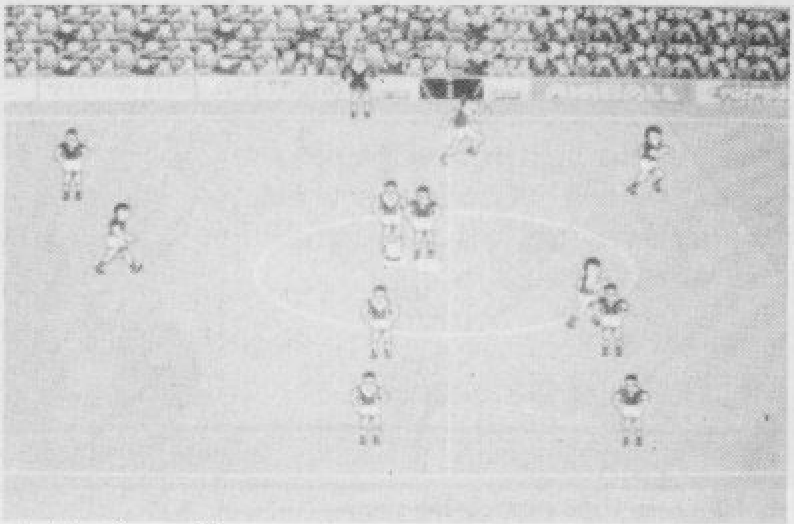
The best aspect of the game is that you have complete choice over which player you control. By centreing the joystick and pressing the fire button, you can move the small white control arrow appearing below the players, until the one you want is selected.

Player control is good too; by holding down the fire button for different lengths of time, you can play a ground pass, a chip or along shot – so long, in fact, that it's quite easy to score from the half-way mark.

You can tackle by closing on an opposing player and pressing the fire button, but if you try this in your goalmouth you will concede a penalty. Penalties can be aimed high or low, left or right, and it's up to the player controlling the goalie to respond appropriately. Goal kicks, throw-ins and corners are taken by pressing the space bar, which seems an unnecessary distraction.

International Soccer is very playable, features a selection of good tunes and nicely detailed graphics. There are a few minor niggles, though; for instance, the ball is never actually seen going into the net; as soon as it crosses the goal-line, the electronic scoreboard display comes up. The program also seems pretty indifferent to subleties like offside, so it's a fun arcade game but not a detailed simulation. Overall, though, you should go for *International Soccer* if you like football at all, or even if you're an Arsenal fan.

► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	8
► VALUE	7
► PLAYABILITY	9

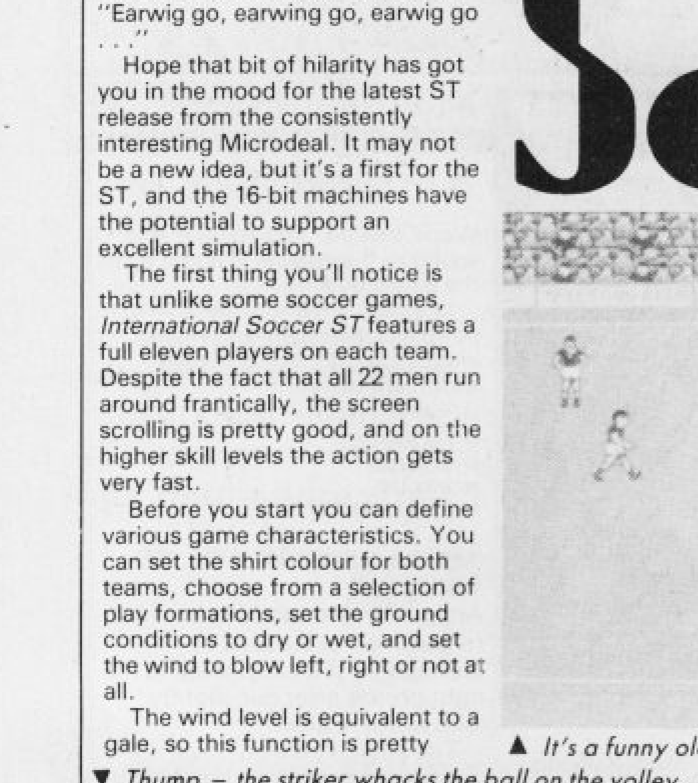

▲ *It's a funny old game.*

As *International Soccer ST* takes well-deserved praise for being the first decent footy game for 16-bit machines, a deluge of soccer games is about to be launched.

It must be impending European Championships! Just about every software house in the country seems about to launch or is announcing plans to launch a footy game.

Sensible Software have a 'hot' soccer game with a *European* flavour to it, Gremlin have two Gary Lineker games to go, Mastertronic are launching the official FA cup game, Addictive are putting the finishing touches to *Football Manager II*. It's going to be soccer city in the games shops.

▼ *Thump – the striker whacks the ball on the volley – but the goalie dives to cover the shot.*



▼ *International Soccer – the first decent footy game for the ST.*



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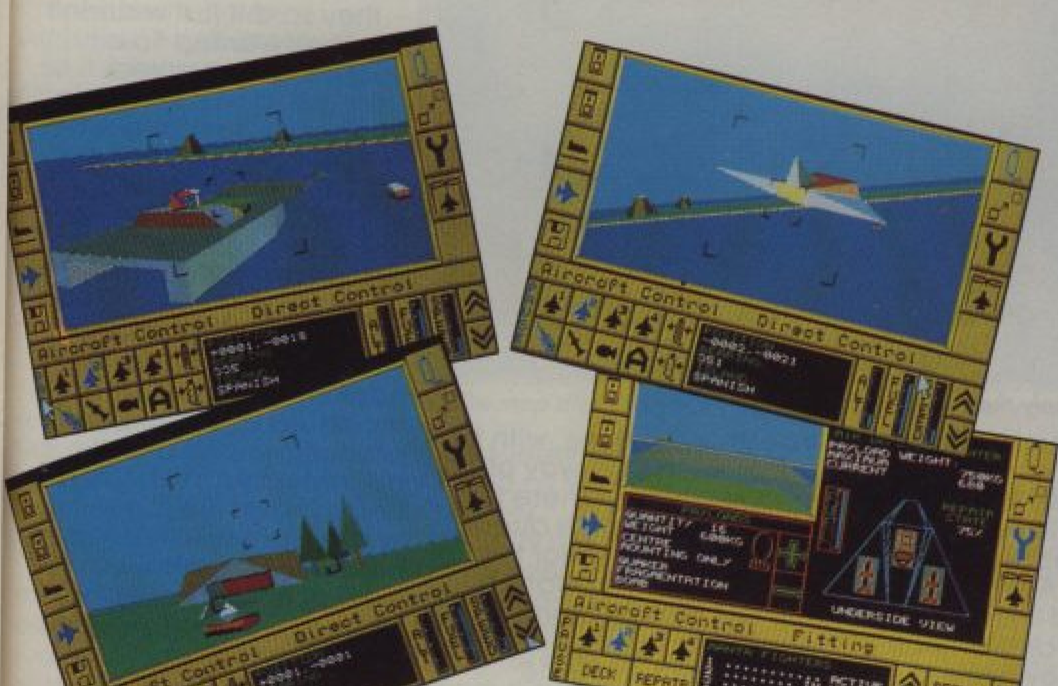
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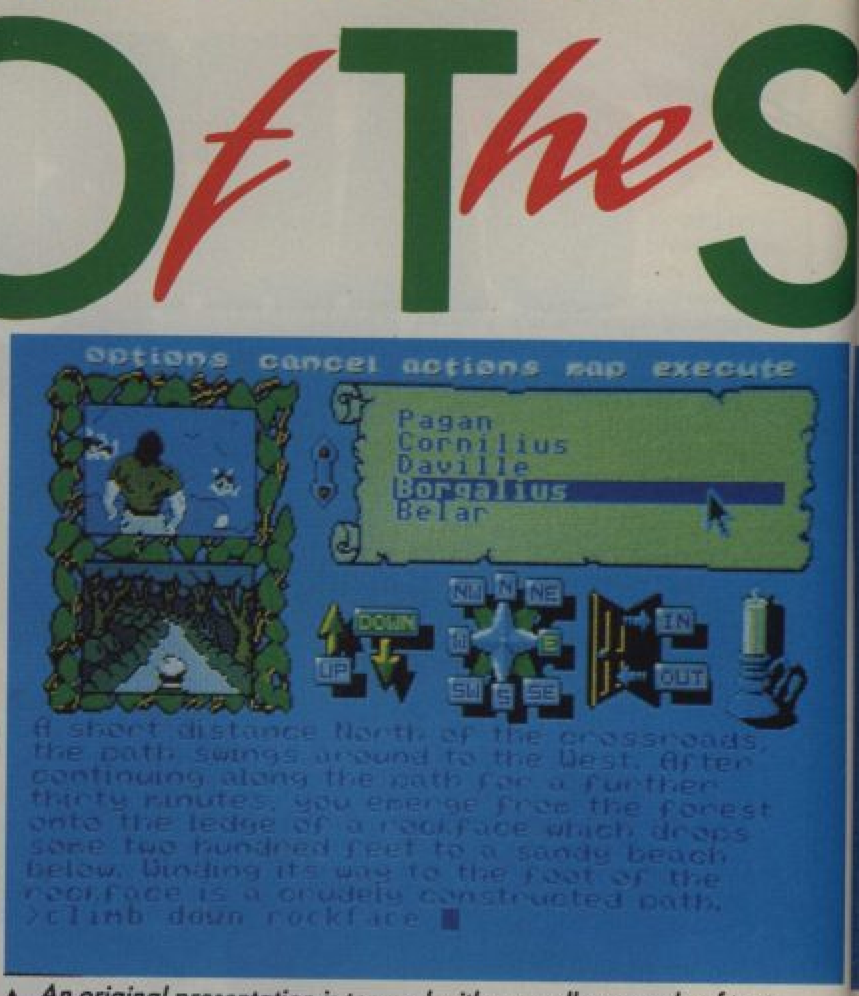
Atari ST screen shots.

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Legend Of The S

The appearance of *The Pawn* a couple of years ago, marked milestone in the history of adventure games. Since then, Rainbird has maintained its reputation for high-quality adventures, with follow-ups *Guild Of Thieves* and *Jinxter*, and Level 9's *Knight Orc*. Now comes *Legend Of The Sword*. Keith Campbell reports.



▲ *An original presentation is teamed with an endless supply of text.*

Legend of the Sword may be new to you, but to *Silicon Soft* – Karl Buckingham, Colin Wooname and Eugene Messina – it's over two years old.

It all started when Karl, then a hospital technician set about writing a novel around a story he had dreamed up. Before long, he had a chat with Colin about it, and as a result he decided it would make a better adventure than book. So Karl gave up his job, and the two of them got together with Eugene, and started to create the game.

Karl himself had not played an adventure at this point, but was eventually to have a tussle with *The Pawn*.

"*Legend* has problems, but you won't find any obscure ones like having to tie a rake to a hoe with a shirt . . ." he mused.

When *Legend* was in a playable form, Karl contacted Mastertronic. "They were happy enough to accept it as it was, and see if it sold," said Karl. Not being too happy about this rather offhand approach to the product of some four man-years work, he next approached Rainbird.

Rainbird liked it, but they weren't prepared to accept an Amstrad version – they said it just wouldn't sell. They wanted 16-bit versions, they wanted changes, and they wanted another six months of work on it.

It has been a big investment in time, with the return still a little way off. But the system is there to use again – and is already being enhanced for the sequel, *The Final Battle*. This will feature more character interaction, with cameo pictures in 16 colours, instead of the four used in *Legend*.

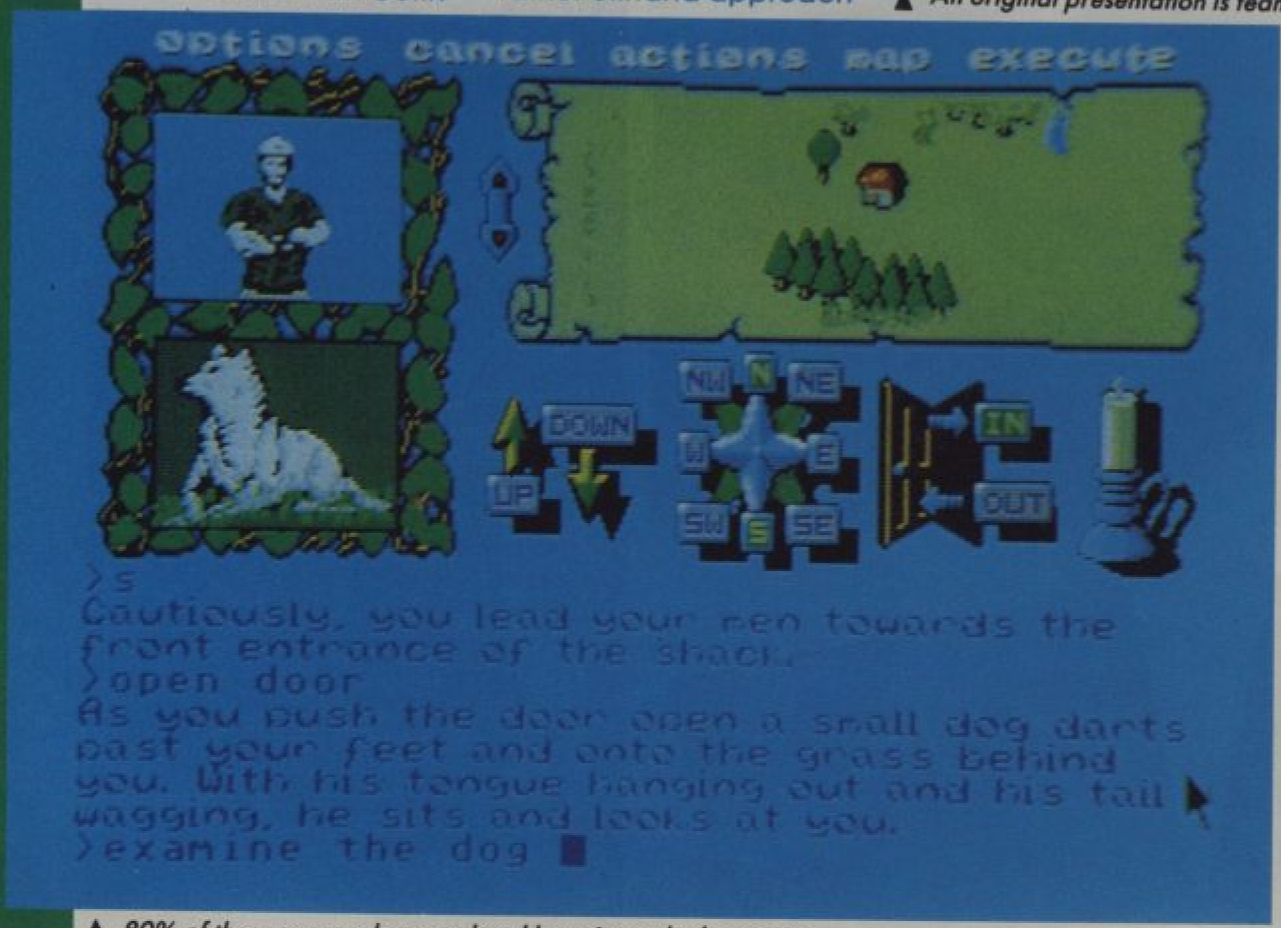
Silicon Soft was set in Eastbourne up under the Enterprise Allowance Scheme, as was Smart Egg Software, who produced *Rigel's Revenge*.

When *Legend* was in a playable form, Karl contacted Mastertronic. "They were happy enough to accept it as it was, and see if it sold," said Karl. Not being too happy about this rather offhand approach to the product of some four man-years work, he next approached Rainbird.

Rainbird liked it, but they weren't prepared to accept an Amstrad version – they said it just wouldn't sell. They wanted 16-bit versions, they wanted changes, and they wanted another six months of work on it, in collaboration with their development team – which includes *C+VG's* own Paul Coppins. Then, they said, they would sell it – and sell it well."

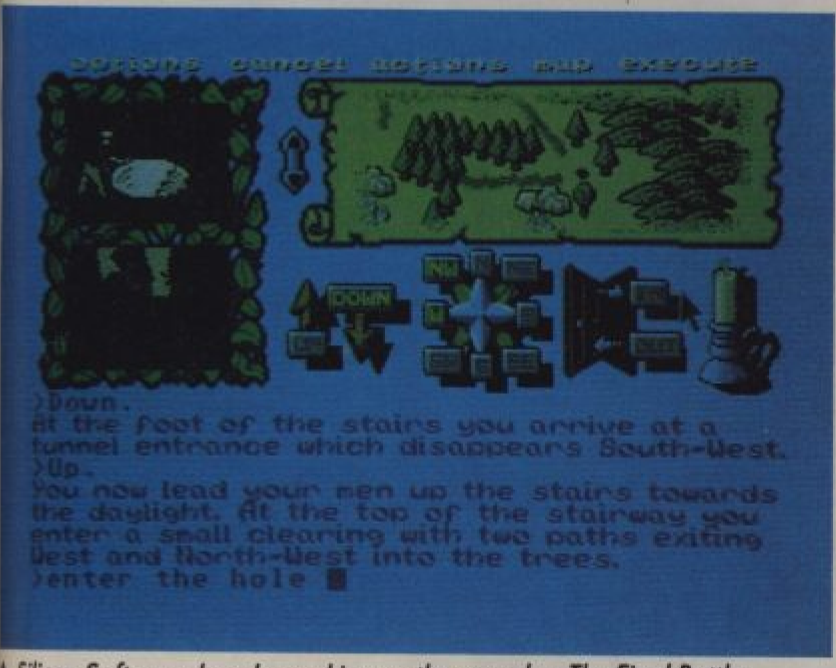
So Colin and Karl, impressed with the backing Rainbird were prepared to put into the product, went out and bought an Atari ST. Colin had to learn the machine in a couple of weeks flat, before setting about recreating the *Legend* system on the ST, which he wrote in C.

"I had a bit of trouble with the C compiler at first, but it didn't work out too bad!" he laughed.



▲ *80% of the game can be completed by using only the mouse.*

Sword



▲ *Silicon Soft are already working on the sequel – The Final Battle.*

► SUPPLIER: RAINBIRD SOFTWARE/SILICON SOFT
► PRICE: ATARI ST – £24.95.
► MACHINES: AMIGA, PC, MAC, VERSIONS EXPECTED SHORTLY. POSSIBLE 8-BIT TEXT ONLY VERSIONS TO FOLLOW.
► REVIEWER: KEITH.

The land of Anar has been invaded by the humanoid army of the evil wizard Shuzar, and only the magic of the mystical sword and shield can protect its inhabitants. But for so long have they been guarded by the ancient Corarians, their whereabouts have vanished into folklore.

So it is that you and five other stalwarts, summoned by King Darius and confronted with the problem, volunteer to go in search of them. You are taken by boat and set down on the coast near to where the shield is believed to be hidden.

Together with your party, you make your way inland, and begin your quest. You are guided by clues, some hidden, waiting to be discovered, others to be gleaned from the locals.

As you move, a pictorial map displays your current position, and new locations are drawn in on your first visit. A very smoothly scrolling picture, it can be enlarged to full screen size by clicking on it, giving you a wider view of your surroundings.

Your band of followers stick steadfastly with you, but on the whole are a pretty useless bunch. They understand, but often fail to respond positively to many of your commands, and sulk if you ask them to give something they regard as their own property.

Usually it is a case of doing everything yourself, rather than directing your band, even to the extent of foraging for food for the whole party. If you don't keep up your strength by eating and drinking, a candle displayed on the screen slowly burns lower until it is snuffed out – and you with it!

In the search for food, valuables, and food, it pays to look and examine things carefully at every point. If you are standing next to an apple tree, for example, you won't discover the fact unless you make a point of being observant.

The parser accepts complete sentences such as *ATTACK THE HUMANOIDS WITH THE SWORD*, but is not up to Magnetic Scrolls or Infocom standard – no doubt it will be improved and developed in time.

On quite a few occasions it thought it had understood my command, whilst failing to grasp quite what I was getting at. *TELL THE OLD MAN TO WAIT*, for example (he is imprisoned in a cell, and I had already spoken to him) brought forth: *HOW CAN YOU WHEN HE'S INSIDE THE CELL AND YOU'RE OUTSIDE? WITH YOUR BACK RESTING AGAINST A STONE WALL. YOU SIT AND WAIT.*

The program works equally well on a high-res mono monitor as on a colour monitor or TV. The mono picture is crisp and clear – far better (dare I say it?) that the black and white versions of the pictures in some other Rainbird adventures I could mention . . . but if you are playing in colour, there's an extra goody – you can change the paper and ink colours by altering the individual strengths of red, green, and blue until you find a mix that suits you best.

With all these features, plus masses of text, it is not surprising, that *Legend* comes on two disks. It is a big game, with many elements of role playing built into a problem orientated adventure. The problems may not prove too easy to solve, but the game is easy and enjoyable to play. It should establish Silicon Soft among the best of adventure producers, and maintain Rainbird's reputation for high quality, high tech adventures. The price is fairly hefty, but you get a lot for your money!

► VOCABULARY	7
► ATMOSPHERE	8
► PERSONAL	9
► VALUE	9



▲ *The map displays your current position in the adventure.*



▲ *Karl, Colin and Eugene.*


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Stac – The ST Adventure Creator

► **SUPPLIER: INCENTIVE SOFTWARE.**
► **MACHINE: ATARI ST: £39.95.**
► **REVIEWER: KEITH CAMPBELL**

A couple of years ago, the first real competitor to *The Quill* appeared, Incentive's *Graphic Adventure Creator*, otherwise known as the *GAC*. The *GAC* started life on the Amstrad, and soon migrated to both Commodore 64 and Spectrum. By now the Quill was offering add-ons, and eventually PAW, and the GAC failed to displace it amongst those who used it to write adventures for commercial publication.

But the *GAC* found a great following among adventure enthusiasts seeking to write their own games, and its success was almost certainly due to its extreme ease of use.

Now *GAC* has become *STAC*, an adventure creator for the Atari ST, written by *GAC's* originator, Sean Ellis. But it is far more than just a conversion from the 8-bit formats. Its many advanced features make it an extremely flexible utility, capable of producing adventures that may be difficult to recognise as STACed.

A similar menu-entry system to *GAC* is used, whereby, in general, the initial letter of the option required is hit to enter it. Type R, for example, and you are immediately into Room descriptions, displayed as a single screen form. Connections with other rooms, and long and short text fields are entered here – press RETURN, and you move on to the next input field, with a final 'Y or N' to keep or abort the entry if you have made a mess of it.

The graphics option is a superb utility for drawing pictures (I had a great deal of fun with it) and offers 16 colours on the same screen. These can be set to any shade you want simply by sliding three little boxes up and down against a scale, until you get the exact mix that suits you. Pictures produced using *Neochrome* and *Degas* can also be used in the adventure.

The text, too, has its graphics side! A Font option allows you to design your own lettering style within an enlarged box broken down into magnified pixels.

All this, and sound too! As well as bleeps and buzzes, music can be incorporated into a message. Chords can be played, although being a single channel, it would be extremely difficult to write a tune with a true accompaniment, and the volume of all notes played will be the same.

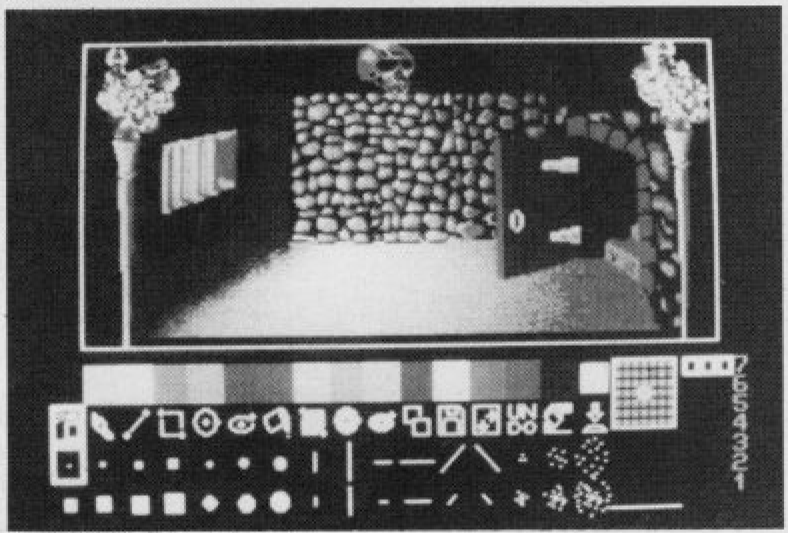
Other features offered by *STAC*, are string manipulation facilities, computations within conditions, and the linking of disks, so that adventures spanning more than one disk may be produced.

With the package comes a 68 page manual, plus a free copy of Shymer, an adventure written by Sheila Sharkey (Reviewed March '88) – but this time it is fully illustrated, with some really stunning pictures.

There is but one disappointment in the package – although you can change the textsize, the program cannot be used with a mono monitor.

With the *STAC*, GAC has come of age, in the same year as its author Sean Ellis, now 21, and a graduate in Cybernetics and Computer Science.

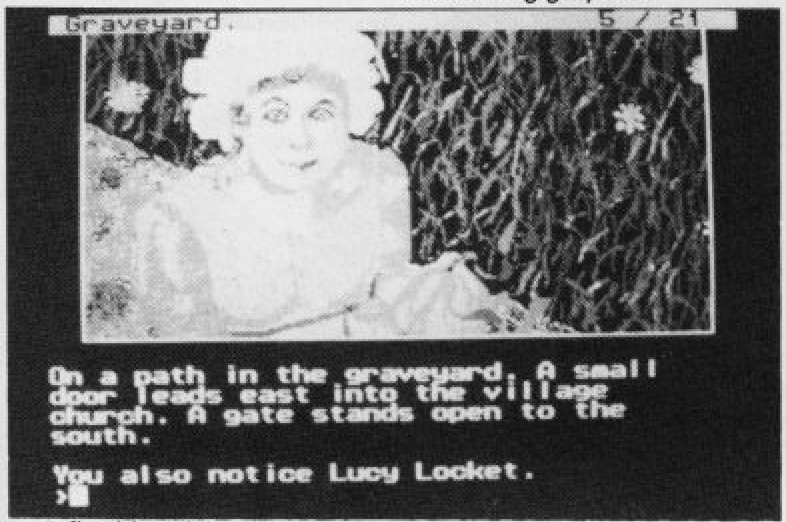
Will we soon see an even more advanced AMAC?



▲ *The graphics option.*



▲ *Stunning graphics.*



▲ *A flexible utility.*

Village Of Lost Souls

► **SUPPLIER: ROBICO**
► **MACHINES: AMSTRAD CPC/ BBC B/MASTER/ELECTRON**
► **PRICE: £9.95 (Cass) £12.95 (Disk)**
► **REVIEWER: KEITH**



Village Of Lost Souls was originally available for BBC micro by mail order only from Magus Software. It has now been reworked and converted to run on Amstrad CPC computers, and released by Robico Software.

This text adventure is set in the medieval world of Albion, where magic still exists, but used only by those gifted with *The Talent*.

You play Nathan, transported by Father-Magister Alain to the village of Dinham, to investigate the resident Lord Talent who is believed to be attempting to open a portal to the thirteenth realm – the Realm of Chaos.

Wandering through the countryside, everywhere is deserted, save for a pack of curs barking and snarling around you. But there are some shocks on the way. The burnt corpse of the miller in the chicken coop is just one of a number of grisly discoveries you make as you travel the village and fields.

But apart from wandering around and examining everything, I found it difficult to know quite what I was supposed to do next.

Nothing obvious presented itself, demanding an answer or action. After a few hours play, I had only come across one real problem: the retrieval of a key too deep in a crack in a stone floor to reach.

Of course I knew I wanted it (you always want a key when you see one, don't you?) yet I had no purpose in mind for it at that stage. And there was a beehive that I believed I knew how to open – although I hadn't actually tried to open it, since I hadn't recognised a problem that required me to!

The adventure performs in a similar way to the early Level 9 text adventures, with slightly jerky text, each location description containing a list of possible exits and their respective destinations. For example:

"There are visible exits north to a farmhouse, south to the Rectory, northwest to a muddy road and southwest to a riverbank."

One rather peculiar feature of the way in which this is implemented, is that when you take the route to, say, the Rectory, you find yourself just outside it, not actually in it. And once inside the Rectory, one of the exits will "out to a Rectory".

Strange!

Whilst there are many locations and plenty of text, some replies are very abrupt, and give the impression that they have been trimmed down to fit everything in. The vocabulary, or rather its omissions, leaves quite a bit to be desired. At a number of locations by a wall, for example, CLIMB WALL may get THAT ONLY FLUMMOXED ME, or I DON'T UNDERSTAND YOU. True, CLIMB is not in the verb list that is displayed by the HELP command – but why?

The parser recognises ALL and EVERYTHING, and in conjunction with BUT, EXCEPT, and APART. Multiple statements are accepted, and there are features like OOPS, and BUFFSAVE (save position to memory) – but the latter is not supported on BBC and Electron tape versions though.

On the whole, the adventure is competently put together, and held hope of opening up into quite a long, interesting, and difficult game, reminiscent of the early, and highly popular Level 9 titles. Indeed, the plot seems to be just as open as many of Level 9's.

I must confess to leaving it at a point where I had scored zilch out of a possible 1200 points!

► **VOCABULARY**	**6**
► **ATMOSPHERE**	**8**
► **PERSONAL**	**7**
► **VALUE**	**7**

BURNING WITH EXCITEMENT???



We defy you to take up the challenge...Go on... Pick up the Keys...

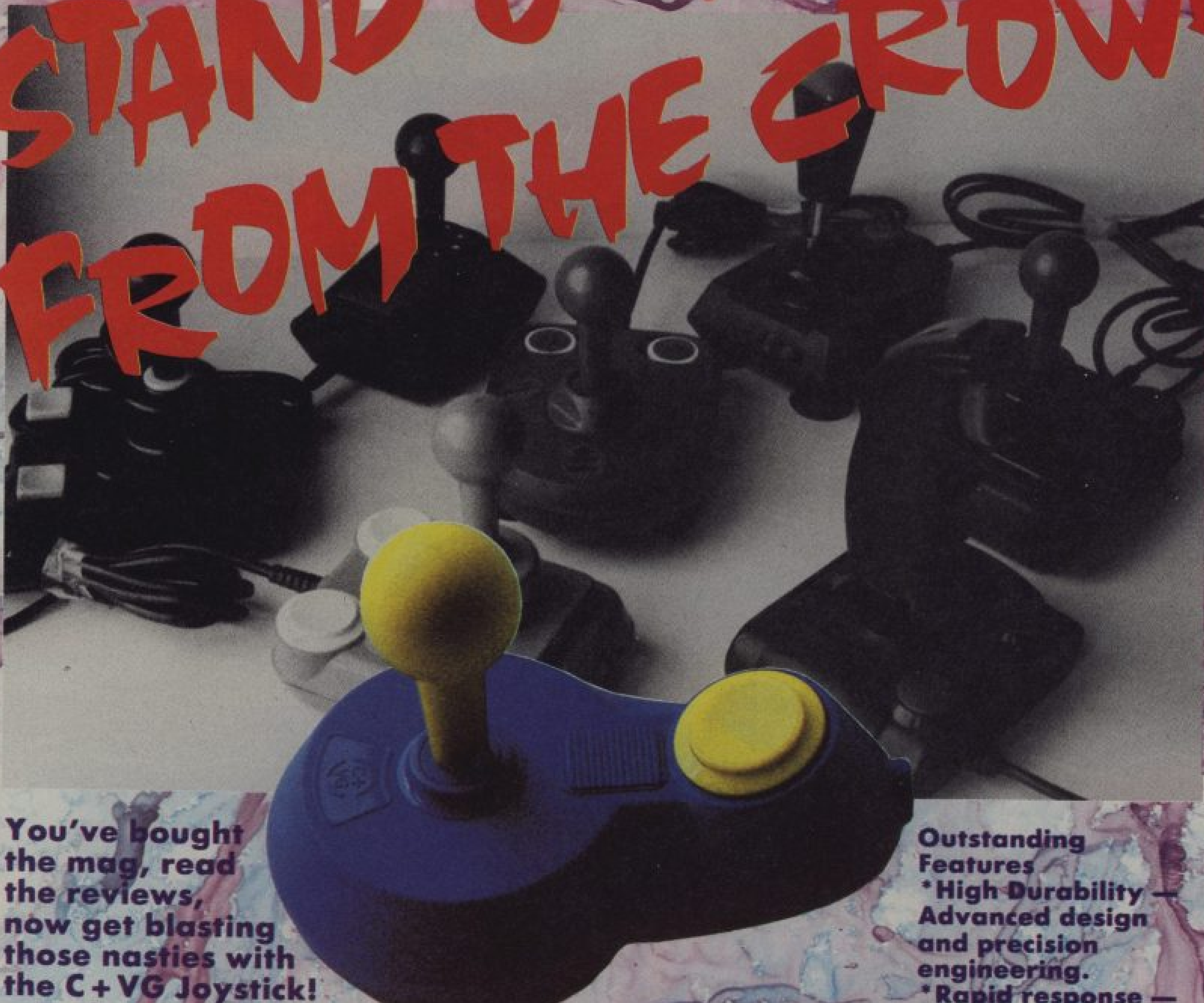
U.S. GOLD

ATARI GAMES


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Helpline Clues

Andrew Bethell of Walsall has a serious question: "Can it be that the Helpline and Adventure pages are shrinking? Only three pages in April – I hope you're not going to vanish into oblivion! Maybe you should get the Ed to drop the stupid comic strips, and use the extra space?"

Wash your mouth out, Andrew! How dare you! You aren't seriously suggesting you would prefer more game reviews in a computer games magazine, than the pictorial antics of *Schmuk and Crude*, who anyday now might pop in and duff up your friendly newsagent?

And with Andrew hot under the collar, who can help cool him down with a hint or two on how to get the sprinkler system working on Vohaul's Asteroid base? Andrew is completely stuck at this point in *Space Quest 2*.

A whole string of clues was sent in by **Jonathan Marshall,** to help with problems aired in the Helpline. Now Jonathan is seeking some help himself, in the form of the whereabouts of the computer tape in KWAH.

How do you cross the swamp in the Labian forest, in *Space Quest 2*, asks **Christopher Wood,** of Hackney?

Mr Guest of Croydon, has reached the castle of light but can't get past the drawbridge in *Phantasie 3*. Meanwhile, in *King's Quest 1* he is trying to get the mushroom, and wondering what to do with the fiddle and the friendly bird.

Soni Griggs of Swanley, can't find a rope, nor open the grating in *Goblin Towers*. Perhaps you've had more luck?

A Mind Forever Voyaging is a rarely mentioned Infocom title in the Helpline. **Mark Kerr,** of Newcastle-upon-Tyne has completed the first two parts, and is wondering what to do next in Part 3. The Prism complex has been overtaken by Ryder and his associates. Mark has recorded Ryder's threats to Perelman, and discovered that there is a guard on the control centre, and that WNNF is to be linked to Prism. Where should he go from here?

Matthew Conway is desperate for a map of *Lords of Midnight*. Anyone out there got a spare copy they could send him? Matthew's address is 1 St. George's Terrace, Station Road, Lambourn, Berks RG16 7PN.

Here's a game I've not heard of before – it's called S.M.A.S.H.E.D. – which according to *Peter Nuttall* of Belfast, who is stuck in it, stands for Strangest Mobile Army Surgical Hospital East of Detroit. Peter cannot get the pearls from Major Wet Lips Jerrycan, nor the password to let him in to the sergeants mess hall. That's not the end of his troubles! He can't defuse the bomb in the latrine, he can't fix the jeep, and he doesn't know what to do with Clingon after taking him out of the minefield! If anyone can throw any light on these problems (or even tell me where the game comes from?) I'd be dead pleased.

Question of the month: Put a lot of people out of their misery, someone, and tell me – how DO you get past the tank in *Rigel's Revenge???*

Tim Branston of Cropwell Butler has got as far as the hotel in *Police Quest*, and needs to ditch 'sweet cheeks Marie' so he can go and play cards. Who can help him get rid of her? She just won't go!

Talking of getting rid of things... who knows how to get rid of Zemps? *Stuart Day* is stuck with them in the citadel in *Kayleth*.

Here are some more *Venomous* problems, this time from *Lindsay Butters* of Glasgow: How do you get into the taproom in the inn? How do you avoid getting killed by the Venomite priest after getting the parchment? How do you cross the abyss and the river?

Anyone heard of a game called *Number 6 in the Village?* Not me, so there's no chance that I can help *Darren Sellwood* of Harrow. General clues to help Darren, anyone?

Help came this month from: *A.J. O'Donovan*, Southampton; *Paul Hardy*, Sheffield; *Johnathan Marshall*, Ealing; *Allan Phillips*, Camden Town; *Matthew Conway*, Lambourn; *Andrew Bethell*, Walsall; *Wyndham Townend*, Huddersfield.

KNIGHT ORC:
Attack the horse with its rider's weapon!

KOBYASHI NARU:
To get the solance, activate it and pull it.

FOOTBALL FRENZY:
There's a spare wheel and jack in your car boot.

THE BIG SLEAZE:
Move obelisk and leave the reception area with the help of a crowbar.

DODGY GEEZERS:
Search the pet shop for canine insomnia cure.

REDHAWK:
Throw the magnet at Techno. Give gloves to the scientist and professor. Sell incriminating photos to the editor for cash.

RIGEL'S REVENGE:
Introduce the bomb to the guards. The bungalow is about as useful as the net!

SPACE QUEST 2:
The reply to acidity is to attach plunger and hold on!

JINXTER:
Be a bad baker! Make things even hotter when the time is right!

BEYOND ZORK:
The answer to the riddle should come to you in a flash.

News

If you are into writing Spectrum adventures, there is a club aimed directly at you! **The Spectrum Adventure Club** seeks to bring together artists, designers, and Spectrum programmers, so that they can benefit from each other's talents. The club offers opportunities for new young adventurers who wish to enter the production side of the industry at an affordable price. Membership is 50p per quarter, from Spectrum Adventurers Club, 21 Winchester Avenue, Cardiff CF3 7BT.

Legend Of The Sword should be in the shops by the time you read this! A new 16-bit only adventure by Silicon Software, and published by Rainbird Software, the game features a completely novel graphics system.

Icon or keyboard driven, the screen depicts up to two cameos relating to the current state of play, from a library of 380, whilst it draws a pictorial map showing your progress as you try to find the sword and shield, and defeat Suzar.

With controllable NPC's (non-playing characters to you!), RAM save and restore, and three levels of OOPS, this adventure, said to be 'very difficult' will be available for Amiga, Atari ST, and IBM PC for £19.95. Review next issue!

Two new Magnetic Scrolls adventure are on the way from Rainbird Software. **Corruption,** the final title of the game described in the February issue, and **Code-names Assassin,** is due for release at about the time you read this.

Shortly afterwards, **Fish** is expected. At the time of writing it is said to be in an advanced stage of development.

Watch out for Rigel's Revenue in Amiga, ST, and PC formats in the near future. Mastertronic's smash hit budget adventure, written by Smart Egg Software, is being substantially enhanced.

Rumour has it that Infocom's **Plundered Hearts** has been taken off the shelves at some stores in the USA, on the ground of being too risque. Obviously, they never played **Leather Goddesses!**


SHUK
doode
ART: SIMON HARRISON
SCRIPT: SIMON HARRISON
TIM CROWFOOT
LETTERS: IVOR WIGGETT
ITN
NEWS FLASH
THIS IS DAN DAN YOUR UP-TO-THE MINUTE ROVING MAN, BRINGING YOU UP-TO-THE MINUTE NEWS!
TWO SMALL MANIACS CAUSE CHAOS IN CENTRAL LONDON TONIGHT! THE GRUESOME TWOSOME, DUBBED THE DEMONIC DUO BY POLICE, TRASHED A CINEMA IN LEICESTER SQUARE, THEN FLED THE SCENE ON A STOLEN MOTORCYCLE!... CAN IT BE THE SAME MIDGETS WHO MARAUDED OUR METROPOLIS NOT FOUR DAYS AGO? ALAS WE MAY NEVER KNOW! FOR THEY RAMMED A POLICE ROAD BLOCK AT OVER ONE HUNDRED MILES AN HOUR!
THE CONCUSSION SHATTERED EVERY WINDOW IN CENTRE POINT AND THE DOMINION FELL IN RUINS! EVEN AS I SPEAK LONDON IS BURNING!... THE DEMONIC DUO ARE NO MORE!
DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS IS? WELL I'LL TELL YOU, IT'S SNOT! THE SAME SNOT WE FOUND ON TWO FRONT SEATS OF THE EMPIRE CINEMA. THE SAME SNOT WE FOUND IN IT'S WRECKED BOOKING OFFICE. THE SAME SNOT WE FOUND ON A FLATTENED VOLKS WAGEN IN FINCHLEY!
ALL THIS DAMAGE WAS CAUSED BY THE SAME PEOPLE! THOSE UGLY KIDS ON THE NICKED BIKE! GOD, I HATE IT WHEN THINGS END THIS WAY, IT'S SO UNTIDY
YOU CAN SAY THAT AGAIN.
INSPECTOR REID, SIR. WE'VE JUST HAD A REPORT FROM ONE OF THE LADS AT THE NICK. SEEMS HE HAD HIS RADIO NICKED.
SO.
WELL, WE WERE IN THE CAR, PURSUING THE SUSPECTS, SIR, WHILE RELAYING INSTRUCTIONS TO OUR COLLEAGUES OUR TRANSMISSION WAS INTERRUPTED BY PERSONS UNKNOWN. SOMEONE WAS LISTENING IN.
FIVE MINUTES AGO THE SCHRANK PANTHER WAS SEEN FLEEING ACROSS THE ROOF TOPS. KIND OF A COINCIDENCE DON'T YOU THINK SIR?
HIM? THAT CAT BURGLAR! WASN'T HE INVOLVED IN THE FINCHLEY EXPLOSION? DAMN! THIS IS TERRIBLE! IT'S A CONSPIRACY! IT GETS WORSE!
YES SIR, THIS IS A SAD DAY FOR TOURISM!
INSPECTOR REID.
YES. WHAT DO YOU WANT?
YOU.


SENSATIONAL NEWS! THE RUMOURS ARE FLYING! RELIABLE SOURCES ALLEGE THE SCHRANK PANTHER, LONDON'S NOTORIOUS CAT BURGLAR MAY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THIS MORNING'S CHAOS IN TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD.
WHO IS THE SCHRANK PANTHER? WHAT WERE HIS LINKS WITH THE NOW DEFUNCT DEMONIC DUO? WHERE DOES HE COME FROM? WHERE DOES HE GO? WHY HAVE ALL POLICE EFFORTS TO CAPTURE HIM COME
TO NOTHING? DON'T MISS OUR SPECIAL REPORT ON THE SCHRANK PANTHER COMING UP AFTER 'MIAMI VICE'! TH... AND THIS IS NEWS JUST COMING IN... SENSELESS AND BIZARRE!
INSPECTOR REID, SENIOR DETECTIVE AT THE SCENE OF THE TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD FIRE HAS RESIGNED, DUE TO, AND I QUOTE, "INTOLERABLE PRESSURE FROM HIS SUPERIORS." IT SEEMS THE MOVE WAS PROMPTED AFTER A BITTER ARGUE MENT WITH THREE TALL STRANGERS IN LONG CAPES....
WHO WRITES THIS STUFF?
POPPA. WE HAVE LOCATED THE LOST EVIDENCE. WE TRACKED THE ITEMS TO A WAREHOUSE ON THE ISLE OF DOGS. WE BELIEVE THEY WERE SENT THERE BY A COSTUMED WRETCH CALLING HIM-SELF THE SCHRANK PANTHER... WE WILL GO THERE. WE WILL LAY IN WAIT, AND WHEN HE ARRIVES TO CLAIM HIS PRIZE, HE WILL BE PUBLICLY EXECUTED!
NO!
NO POPPA. THERE'S MORE. UNUSUAL THINGS. LISTEN...
TOO MUCH IS UNCLEAR. IF HE IS INVOLVED THIS PANTHER PERSON MAY PROVE USEFUL. TAKE HIM ALIVE. BRING HIM TO ME... COME COME AZMO DEUS. YOU CANNOT HIDE YOUR THOUGHTS FROM ME. YOU WORRY ABOUT THE POLICEMAN. HIS NOISY RESIGNATION HAS BEEN NOTED. WORRY NOT. HE WILL NOT CO-OPERATE, BUT HE WILL NOT TALK EITHER. THAT I PROMISE YOU....
THE SCREAM. THE SCREAM CAME FROM HERE.
ARCADE
FAMILY FUN
AMUSEMENT ARCADE REAR ENTR
THE ARCADE MANAGER... CHRIST! DEAD AS A DOORNAIL. DIED OF FRIGHT BY THE LOOKS OF IT. WHAT ARE THEY UP TO NOW? I JUST KNOW THEYRE NOT DEAD...
GARK!

READY STEADY GO!

Work on converting Capcom's *Streetfighter, Tiger Road, 1943* and *Black Tiger* is now nearing completion.

These four releases from US Gold are part of a £2 million, ten game deal signed last Christmas with the Japanese coin-op specialists.

So if you havn't seen the games in the arcades, here's what to expect.

STREETFIGHTER

Streetfighter is one of the most realistic martial arts combat games, a sort of street Olympics with opponents from Japan, USA, China, Thailand and England.

The character sprites are huge and background graphics are spectacular with colourful street scenes.

The action is intense. Each game consists of three rounds – beat your opponent and you get to face the next, even tougher, fighter. Punches, stoop kicks, backward flips and flying kicks are just a few of the moves to master.

Each of the ten opponents has different skills and/or weapons to deal with. You'll need all your arcade combat skills to reach the last round – a battle against the strongest men in the world. You can choose to be Ryu or Ken, two young masters of the martial arts.

The deluxe version of the arcade machine caused a stir when it appeared in the arcades as it features pneumatically controlled pads which you hit to make your character kick or punch.

Streetfighter is probably the first arcade game which left players in sweaty, exhausted heaps after a long session. You can always tell when the machine is in use from the thumps, thuds and grunts coming from that corner of your local arcade!

TIGER ROAD

It will be no mean task to defeat the evil minions of Ryu Ken Oh in this esciting martial arts arcade adventure. *Tiger Road* is based on an actual ancient Chinese fable, the plot goes like this. Ryu Ken Oh, the baddie, has been raiding villages and kidnapping children. He intends to brainwash these poor kids and turn them into soldiers for his evil army.

The master of the Oh Rin temple has ordered his best student, Lee Wong, (that's you!) to save the children and defeat Ryu Ken Oh! To do this Lee has to complete many hazardous levels, each with a big bad enemy at the end. To aid his quest, Lee has a magical jacket which helps him jump and fly, plus special weapons like the chains and sickle, a spear and the Snake weapon. Hoards of Samurai warriors make the journey difficult. They come at you from all angles, swinging vicious curved axes. Beat them off with your weapons or with a well aimed karate kick.

Beware of giants, ninja warriors flying on hand glider contraptions, rolling boulders and awesome dragons and acrobatic sumo wrestlers! The arcade game begins outside a ruined temple. Apart from the Samurai warriors there is a large man sitting on top of the ruins, who takes pleasure in sticking a large pike into your body from time to time. You have to make good use of Lee's jumping skills here to leap onto the ruins and give this nasty pikeman a taste of your sword.

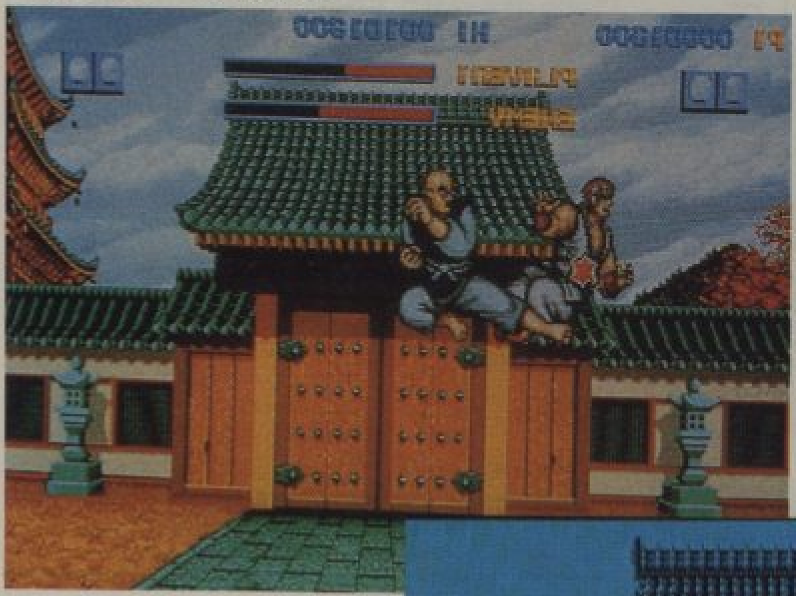
The next section pits you against a giant. You have to time your attacks perfectly – as if you let the giant get too close he'll grab you by the neck, half strangle you and throw your crushed body across the screen!

If you manage to survive this beast the ordeal of the rolling stones begins. These stones are deadly. Again timing is vital as you leap these boulders to avoid being squashed. Once you leap the last rock you find yourself in a cell with an infuriated Sumo wrestler. He is quite an acrobat and attacks by climbing up the walls and swinging across the ceiling.

The arcade game is very big and has many levels – including a forest scene with ferocous flying dragons. *C+VG's* arcade expert Clare Edgeley said: *"Tiger Road* is a must for all martial arts fans." We are sure you'll



▲ *Tiger Road – the coin op.*



▲ *Streetfighter – from the arcades.*



▲ *1943 – following a clank.*

think the same about the computer versions.

1943

Slip into your flying jacket for *1943,* the sequel to Capcom's classic aero-shoot 'em up, *1942.* You are back in the hot seat ready for the Battle of Midway, your twin-engined catamaran design P-38 on a mission to destroy the Japanese battleship Yamato. This time your aircraft can make use of six secret weapons, collected as you blast through the flak-filled skies.

You can still perform the famous loop-de-loop, but you can also create nasty weather conditions – lightning, a cyclone and even a "tsunami' – that's a tidal wave.

Power-up weapons available to the coin-op pilot include three-way shot, auto fire, a super shell and side fighter which is a bit like the 'double' feature in *Nemesis.* The side fighter is a smaller 'plane which increases your attacking power.

These optional extras are collected by shooting enemy aircraft and picking up the power-up pods which then drift down the screen.

Exciting and additive shoot 'em up action which will hook even the most jaded zapper, that's what you get if you time warp back to *1943!*



▲ *1943 – will hook zappers.*



▲ *ST version.*



▲ *Black Tiger – brave demonic dragons.*

BLACK TIGER

Long ago, three evil dragons descended from the skies and destoyed a kingdom, bringing a nightmare of darkness and destruction and decades of evil to this once bright and glittering world. From this suffering kingdom emerged a great and brave fighter, determined to being back light and goodness to the world.

Play *Black Tiger* and you enter a sinister world of dragons and demons. All the elements of true fantasy adventure are packed into this different and absorbing coin-op.

Black Tiger is a Conan-style figure, a hero battling evil in a fantastic world. As he travels through and under this weird world *Black Tiger* must battle the many different monstrous minions of the dark dragons.

Fortunately, there are people who will help the hero – the wisemen. The bad news is that Black Tiger has to rescue these poor spellbound creatures before he can enlist their assistance. Some wisemen will sell Black Tiger extra armour or weapons. How does he purchase these things? By earning 'zenies' These are earned by defeating enemies or saving Wisemen.

Black Tiger will need all the extra armour he can get to be successful in the final great battles against the three dragons which come at him one at a time.

He loses armour when enemies hit him – enemies like the ugly axe-wielding goblins and other mean mutants.

Each level has to be completed within a time limited – but Black Tiger can gain extra seconds by saving the Wisemen turned to stone by the dragons.

Streetfighter, Black Tiger, 1943 and *Tiger Road* will be available on Commodore 64, Spectrum, Amstrad, Atari ST and Amiga.

GET IT BEFORE IT GOES!



Don't let some weirdo buy your copy! Place a regular order with your newsagent NOW!



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____

BIG Screen

Priests, punks, psychos, satan . . . and even an over-affectionate android! This month has got it all for our man in the back stalls, Ward R. Street.

A decrepit church in run-down L.A.; an elderley priest quietly expires. But the holy man who's just taken the long rest was a member of a secret religious sect, The Brotherhood of Sleep, and without him the world is no-longer safe. The **Prince of Darkness** (18) is about to claim his crown!

Outside the church a shabby figure stumbles to a halt – then another. The local bums stare at the building, transfixed. And deep in the crypt a strange green light swirls angrily in a heavy brass and glass canister that's at least seven million years old and no longer secure. All hell is about to be let loose!

Luckily another priest realises that these are forces too great for one man to control – forces too great for religion itself – so he enrols a variety of experts from the local university. Physicists, chemists and even students of ancient languages and their professors are roped in for a weekend of high science and even higher drama.

While some struggle to understand the mysterious, neon whirlwind by quantifying it with quantum physics, taking a trip into the realms of anit-matter. Others discover that a two-thousand year old document seems to tell how the devil was locked away from the world. But the ones who really get to grips with Old Nick are the unlucky few who swallow a jet of foul-tasting liquid – and become his slaves!

All pretty silly stuff, you may think, and so it would be but for one thing – director John Carpenter. He played trick or treat with your nerves at **Halloween,** he chilled you to the bones with **The Fog** and sickened you when he showed you his **Thing.** But this new mixture of psychics (all apparently theoretically correct) and psychics proves that the devil has all the best plots.

Trapped by the army of street people, plus attacks by worms, beatles and even a cameo appearance by Alice Cooper (no, it's not that bad – he doesn't sing), the students are prey to the ever-increasing number of demonically-possessed members of their own team. This is stalk and shriek of the highest order.



▲ *Prince of Darkness: A case for Clearasil.*



▲ *Making Mr Right: A case for treatment.*



▲ *A prayer for the Dying: Saving Grace.*

It might almost have been called **Assault on Parish 13** after another Carpenter classic.

Helping crank up the suspense is horror stalwart Donald Pleasance as the priest, proving that a good actor can convince you of even the most unlikely plots . . . at least for a hundred minutes. Then, with your nerves shredded, you can walk out of the cinema, telling yourself that there's no such thing as pure evil. The hell there isn't!

Battling more earthly menances, another brilliant actor, Bob Hoskins, pops up as a priest in **A Prayer for the Dying** (15). But despite his presence, the film should be given the last rites immediately. It's a stiff from start to finish.

Quite who is to blame is unclear, as director Mike Hodges tried to have his name removed from the credits after the film was re-edited without his say-so. But unless he had different performances, different takes – and probably a different script – I can't see how his version could have been any better.

In fact the film has only one saving grace – Mickey Rourke, turning in a superb performance as an IRA man hiding out in London. He bungles a gangland assassination he's been forced to carry out when he's seen by a priest, but nipping into the church he tells all and hides behind the sanctity of the confessional.

There's a tear jerking sub-plot with Rourke falling for the priest's daughter who, just to pile on the pathos, happens to be blind. And there's Alan Bates in high- camp mode as an undertaker who uses his business as a front for criminal activities, and sports a nice line in sadistic sidekicks.

Somewhere beneath this adaptation of a Jack Higgins best-seller is an interesting story of morality and a man who wants to renounce violence. It's the sort of situation that Hitchcock handled so well, but under Mike Hodges' portentous direction it soon becomes melodramatically unconvincing, grinding on to an ending so wildly symbolic that even the blind girl could see through it.

From the gloom of the last rites to **Making Mr Right** (15), the month's most delightful film and winner of the Ward R Street seal of approval. But you may have to search hard to catch this little gem because it's only getting a limited release.

Make the effort for Mr Right though, because Susan **(Desperately Seeking Susan)** Seidelman has created a sci-fi story with a twist. It's fresh, sassy, so off-the-wall it's almost hyperactive - and if you don't fall in love with its android hero, Ulysses, you've got a heart of stone.

Or maybe a heart of pure science like the life-like droid's unemotional creator, Jeff Peters, who hasn't got the sense to fall for cute PR lady, Frankie Stone (played by the wonderful Ann Magnuson). She's been brought in to spruce up the android's public profile in a search for more government funding. But she takes humanisation too far and Ulysses falls in love with

continued ▶

BIG *Screen*

her.

For a state-of-the-art research establishment, Chemtech's labs look decidedly bargain basement, just one step up from the sets in **Dr Who.** But this is not serious glitz and chrome sci-fi. The cardboard scenery seems to tell you not to take the science too serously but concentrate on the characters.

And what a wonderful bunch they are. Scatter-brained Frankie is breaking off an affair with an arrogant congressman while trying to plan for a nightmarish family wedding. Her best friend is hiding from her muscle-bound husband, star of a cheesy soap-opera, and actually 'makes' Mr Right before she realises his pulse is (im-)purely electronic.

Then there's John **(Empire of the Sun)** Malkovich as the child-like Ulysses, identical twin to his creator, Jeff, who makes Mr Spock look over-emotional. Confusion reigns as randy lab-technician Sandy, who pursues Jeff Like he's the last man on earth, ends up dating Ulysses – and soon discovers that he wasn't programmed with social graces when he squirts ketchup all over her new dress in a burger bar!

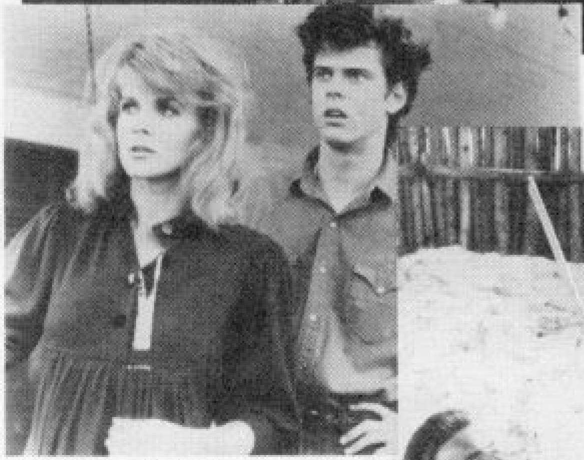
If this was a fair world, **Making Mr Right** would be on a wide release while this month's clunkers would be consigned to special fleapits reserved for bad movie masochists. But the world isn't fair so all I can do is implore you to search out **Mr Right** right now.

There's nothing four-square about **Five Corners** (15) either. It's a wonderfully eccentric study of life in New York's lower-middle class Bronx neighbourhood back in 1964, concentrating on a group of young people much in the way that **American Graffiti** did. But while that rock 'n' rollin' epic elevated one night into mythical proportions, **Five Corners** keeps its feet firmly in reality.

That's not to say that it isn't packed with quirky humour and odd events. Some, such as the dead penguin in the park, are explained. But there are other events, such as the teacher who is shot in the back by an arrow, which are never fully explained. It's that sort of a neighbourhood!



▲ *Ironweed: Heavy going.*



▲ *A Tiger's Tale: A paw show?*



▲ *Jane and the Lost City: Frilly frolics.*

The five corners centre on the return of Heinz, a neighbouring thug, just released from jail for the attempted rape of pet-shop assistant Linda. To her defence rushes James, who was left with a limp when he tried to rescue her all those years ago, and had to be saved himself by tough-guy Harry.

It's an explosive situation with Heinz, who's psychotic enough to think that Linda will want him back, after Harry's blood. But, in the words of Bob Dylan's song, 'The times, they are a changing,' and Harry has become deeply involved in America's growing civil rights movement and has pledged himself to non-violence.

Now add a couple of gum-chewing, glue-sniffing bimbettes and a pair of aimless, fun-loving teenage boys who get their kicks riding around on the tops of elevators. Stir in Harry's mother, who isn't too keen on her son going to get his head split open in a clash with Deep South racists. Finally enrol Detective 'Big Foot' Sullivan and Sergeant Mazola, who's always ready with an unlikely theory about the killings to solve it al.

Five Corners is far more than just a collection of wacky characters in search of a plot though. The film may appear free-wheeling, but its rambling events slowly pain an invigorating portrait this suburb of The Big Apple in '64.

If it's big acting you want, there's more than enough in **Ironweed** (15). It's the story of homeless, dispossessed drifters in the small American town of Albany in 1938. Nameless, faceless people – which makes it strange to cast Jack Nicholson, Tom Waits and Meryl Streep in the three central parts.

Nicholson is Phelan, an ex-baseball star down on his luck, his brain confused by drink and haunted by the ghosts of men he killed in the past. Streep is a once-beautiful singer who couldn't stand the pace and now, bedraggled and almost toothless, keeps up a love-hate relationship with Phelan. And Waites puts in a typically twisted cameo as a bum dying of cancer.

Next it's **A Tiger's Tale** (15), an odd-ball story set in Texas, which has animal-loving Bubber faling for his bratty girlfriend's mother, played by the amply-rounded Ann-Margret. He eventually moves in with the older woman and even becomes a father.

First time director Peter Douglas, Michael's brother, avoids the pitfall of producing a gross-out coming of age comedy or an imitation of **The Graduate,** but unluckily he's not sure-footed enough to find another direction. The tone is uncertain and interest runs out long before the final reel. A tiger or a dog? Woof-woof!

Woof-woof but not the worst. We'll save that for last. Don't be fooled into thinking that Jasper Carrott's presence in **Jane and the Lost City** (PG) makes this comic strip (with the emphasis on strip) frolic funny. I could go on at great length benoaning the waste of time, talent and money (about 24p by the look of it) but it's kinder to clam up now with this warning: avoid this plain Jane at all costs!



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Luge – Daring: a touch of winter madness! Lying prone, feet first on a sled technologically designed to assault time you'll use every muscle in your body to make the most of each straight and curve on a choice of courses.
TM

Gore

Welcome to the gore zone, a totally tasteless offering of decaying corpses, nightmarish visions and blood and guts. Yes, *C + VG* delves into the world of horror film special effects and shows just how it's done. Let the screaming commence...

Just how do you rip someone's head off without it hurting? Tricky, eh? And have you ever wondered how movie monsters are made so terrifyingly real?



▲ *Hellraiser: Skin problems.*

The answer is special effects, a highly-skilled factor in the film-maker's art.

The most beautiful moron can be turned into a movie star but you need to be extra talented to work on special effects.

If you don't have a natural gift for inventing the unusual or bizarre, you may as well forget about applying for a job with such teams as MMI and George Lucas' Industrial light and Magic in the United states, or Bob Keen's Image Animation in Britain.

They're always on the lookout for recruits, fresh from design college or even school, but if you can only show them your impression of a vampire or an improvement on a standard werewolf's head, take this advice. Become an actor.

Even if you've got the talent and you're accepted, there's the usual six month apprenticeship. Not only do you have to learn by watching the experts doing the job, rather than going to a formal college or (l)earning through work experience, but you also have to prove that you can fit in with the members of a project team without demanding unnecessary extra attention from your supervisors.

These special effects teams can be made up of dozens of people. Take Clive Barker's *Hellraiser*, for instance. Bob Keen was responsible for the special make-up effects but, during the most fretful parts of the production schedule, 35 people, many of them freelancers, took part in creating monsters, bodies and blood. And that's not to mention the teams of lighting and sound technicians who created the movie's claustrophobic atmosphere.

MAKE-UP AND OPTICALS

There are two types of special effect – known as SFX – make-up and optical. Make-up effects are executed during the movies' production schedule –



▲ *Vengence: A full body suit.*

which can be anything from two to 12 weeks, depending on the budget. They account for the way in which the monster actors look with the rubberised art of prosthetics, for the props, explosions, and pieces of scenery. If it's not human, and it moves live in front of the camera, the make-up effects department probably have a hand, or two, in it.

Optical effects are usually added to the film during the post production, pre-editing period. They include computer generated animation, glows, lightning and dozens of other stunners which are added electronically to the picture.

Often opticals will enhance the effect of make-up as in the case of the demon effects in Steven Spielberg's *Poltergiest*. The demon head, which blasted out of the doorway after the late Heather O'Rourke was rescued from limbo, was a combination of an animated model – animaltronics – and tints added by optical processes.

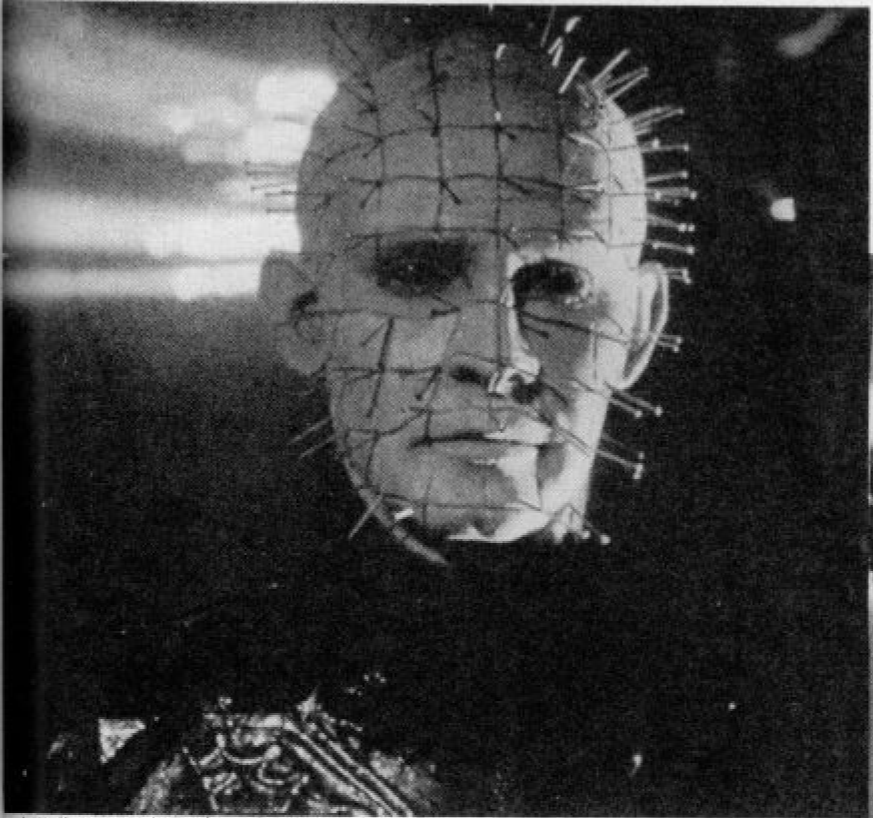
PRE-PRODUCTION

Before any effects' work is done, however, the director and producers meet with a designer who turns the script's major scenes into visual story boards. The

Zone

boards show production staff how the settings and special effects should look at the cinema screen.

The SFX supervisors then study the script and drawings to see if the work their team are being asked to do is possible and, if so, give guidance on how certain effects should be achieved while staying within budget. Most horror movies have low budget – again take *Hellraiser* or Frank Hennenlotter's *Brian Damage*, both of which had only a few million to spend on production.



▲ *Hellraiser: A Pinhead gets the point.*

MAKE-UP

Despite the graphic detail on the story boards the make-up effects team still has to create the creature which will terrorise the human stars. All members of the team have an opportunity to input during the design process before the SFX supervisor shows the final sketches to the film's director.

Most directors leave all design considerations to the experts but, in some cases, they may have strong ideas on how all aspects of the movie should look. Ken Russell is such a director. The make-up effects in *Gothic*, for instance, were heavily influenced by his sensual filmic style and his new films, versions of Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and *Lair Of The White Worm*, all have Russell's style stamped on their SFX.

Once the drawings are approved, or altered, the SFX team starts to translate design into practice. Most horror film effects involve the art of Prosthics, through which the human body can be distorted and fantastic creatures from beyond the grave brought into the reality of a movie lot at Pinewood or a studio in Los Angeles.

The Prosthetic process is very uncomfortable for the poor actors who have to go through it. They not only have to endure long early morning hours in the make-up chair while the appliances are fitted but also have to take a hellish part in their design.

Prosthetic appliances are made from thin, flexible, latex-based, rubber which, unfortunately, tears easily, and can be worn only a few times. For that reason a plaster origination cast is made so that several copies of the appliance can be produced.

The cast is usually formed by using an actor's body because the appliance must fit snugly. If the actors are lucky they'll only be needed for their hands, legs or faces. Others are less fortunate, especially if they're appearing in films such as *Hellraiser* or *Vengence: The Legend Of Pumpkinhead;* which has just been released in the USA, where the monsters are naked and full-body suits are required. Only full immersion, baptism in plaster, makes it possible to create a body suit base for an actor. In *Pumpkinhead*, for instance, the creature actor was more than six feet tall and the giant demon had to be moulded to his body contours.

The body cast is only the first step in the Prosthetics process. The SFX artist then creates a model of the arm, leg, or body from the actor's cast and remodels the body, using a flexible clay-like material, while still keeping to the actor's measurements. A cast is then made of the model and filled with the pink liquid rubber solution which is used to create the altered body appliance.

When the appliance is ready it's painted for skin tone and the artist adds any extra texture, such as the pins in *Hellraiser's* Pinhead Cenobite and Rick Baker's toothy creation for An *American Werewolf In London.* It's then fitted to the actor by the film's on-set make-up staff who must make sure that the rubber blends in with the rest of the actor's body. The face is the most awkward area to fit because rubber has to be attached to the eyelids and the contours of the nose.



▲ *Werewolf: A few shaving nicks?*

The gore-appliers must also be careful where they splatter blood or pus. Some directors will have fits during the rush viewings of

continued on page 94 ▶

Gore Zone

the day's scenes if blood on the left side of a face suddenly vanishes and appears on the other side. The continuity staff are there to ensure that this sort of catastrophe doesn't happen.

LIMBS

The ability to rip limbs from a human body is a precise science, practiced with relish by FX artists.

Arms, legs and heads must look life like and are created in the same way as hollowed body appliances. They may be fitted with explosive squibs if they're meant to explode, be wired to an actor's body if they're to be pulled off, or packed with rubber intestines which are fired or drawn out during mutilation scene.

In the splatter film genre, and in some modern mainstream crime thrillers, human intenstines are often moulded in plastic and hollowed out. They are packed, with squibs, into a breast plate which the actor wears under his clothing. Fluid sacks are attached to a hand pump which is concealed behind the actor, off camera.

When the squibs are exploded, tearing the clothes and releasing the intestines, the hand pump is squeezed and gore squirts or oozes from the wound.

If a director requires more mutilation than the surface effects on an actor's body a prosthetic limb can be substituted in close up and detonated with a squib. During the process a high speed camera is used so that, on normal speed playback, the explosion is shown at a slower speed and its effect looks more horrific.

STOP MOTION

Some effects sequences make the use of human actors or ordinary Prosthetic appliances, in front of a normal speed camera, impractical. On these occasions the make-up effects team co-operates with the studio's stop-motion department.

Stop motion photography, developed by SFX pioneers such as Ray Harryhausen in the *Sinbad* movies of the 1960s, takes its principles from the art of cartoon film making. The special camera can be set to run at a variety of speeds, including one frame for each press of a trigger by the operator.

The make-up FX team builds the model limb, spacecraft or creature to be animated by producing a wire frame model of the subject and surrounding it with the Prosthetic rubber skin for its body. The limbs of the body can then be bent into various shapes.

Alternatively, the animation subject may be an ear or the nails of a hand which have to seem to grow quickly. These are made out of mouldable clay so that they can be stretched as well as bent around the wire base.

The subject is placed in front of the camera, a few frames are shot and the subject is moved slightly – fingers bent, ears waggled – before a few more frames are taken. The result is a film sequence in which the subject appears to be moving or mutating of its own accord.



▲ *Hellraiser: Beauty is only skin deep.*

Stop motion sequences are cut into the movie in various ways. If the sequence is in close-up the director usually inter-cuts it with shots of live actors to make the scene seem more real. If, however, the animated subject is a scale model which must be seen against a live background together with real actors an optical technique, called blue screening, is used.

The model to be animated is shot against a blue which is invisible to the camera which has been told to ignore that key colour. The actors, meanwhile, film their scene in the live set, reacting to the animated monster which they cannot see and will be added during the post production process.



▲ *Hellraiser: Monster – man or mod*

DEVELOPMENTS

Most special effects work, particularly of the optical variety, are filmed partly on set and partly during post production. Recently, however, several US directors, including Stan Winston in *Pumpkinhead* and Gary Sherman in *Poltergeist III,* have produced the whole SFX package live on set. These movies are more expensive to make than those using scale models and post production film tinting processes, but during the live FX shooting the director can see immediately if the effects required are working.

So, why do directors really prefer all effects, including lightning and flood, on set? The reason becomes obvious if you study and compare any old horror movie in which post production effects were used, with a new film such as *Poltergeist III.* If you look carefully at some of the sequences in say. Larry Cohen's Q, you'll be able to see the fracture in the film where model effects were added. Study *Poltergeist III,* however, look for the splits and you won't discover any.

The future can only be bigger and better. Who knows what the world of special make-up effects will release into our world.



▲ *Brain Damage: Spot the brain cell.*

Tally-ho Competition!

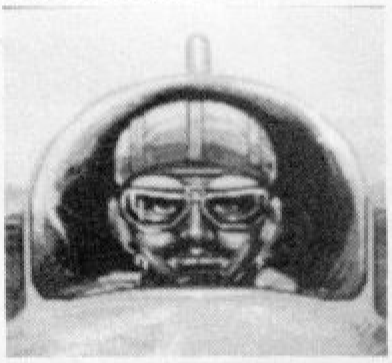


Who is this magnificent man in his flying machine? Well, it's Reckless Roger, the high-flying ace from Activision's *Gee Bee Air Rally,* which recreates the good old days of American plane races. It's vintage stuff.

And thanks to Activision we've got our grubby mits on some tasty prizes to give away. No, it's not the plane! In fact we've got five leather flying jackets up for grabs. Win one and you'll be cool staying warm.

So what do you have to do. Well, we want you to make up a funny caption – in not more than 30 words – for our Reckless Roger photograph.

Send it altogether with the printed coupon to *Gee Bee Air Rally Competition, Computer + Video Games,* Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. The closing date is June 16th.



GEE BEE AIR RALLY

NAME........................AGE......................

ADDRESS..

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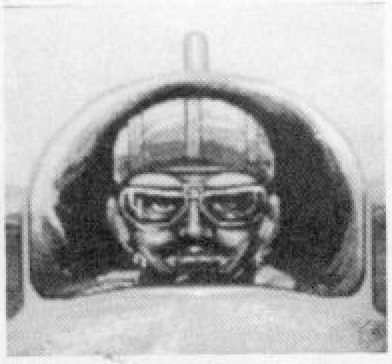
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BOOTS VIDEO *Competition*



Meet a new video star who will soon become a very familiar face to all those who buy their games from Boots. This slick trick of computer wizardry will be "hosting" the new in-store videos advertising the latest games.

This is no Max Headroom who we all know is just an actor with a false head combined with clever camera tricks. Forget plastic Max. This is the real thing. Or rather it isn't.

This character — who hasn't got a name yet — was created by a £200,000 Symbolics Colour Graphics System which, according to the experts, is the "sexiest machine in town" at the moment.

But he won't remain so for very because we want YOU to come up with a brilliant and appropriate name for him and a chance to win an Atari ST.

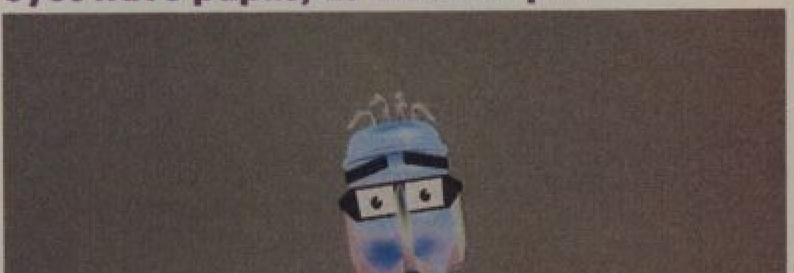
And the next 500 entries will get a booklet of Boots' Action Pack Coupons. Each of the ten vouchers will give a £2 discount on Boots Software priced at £5.95 or more.

Mr Boots — that's what we'll call him for the moment — is the brainchild of the two men behind the Boot Promotional videos, Peter Reynolds and Peter Rushton. They started producing the videos back in August 1985. The new format, which should be in the stores now, will set new standards.

After discussions about what Mr Boots should look like Peter Rushton created the visual image and colour artwork.

Peter Reynolds had seen the Symbolics system being demonstrated and the decision was taken to use it to create and animate Mr Boots.

The figure of Mr Boots was broken down into individual structures and sub-structures. For instance, his head consists of spectacles, face, forehead, hat nose, eyebrows, ears and jaws etc. Some of these features also have sub-parts. The eyes have pupils, as an example.



Each part and its relationship to other individual parts is programmed into computer. This process takes several days. When complete, the figure can perform certain movements. These movements are then filmed and then edited into various sequences.

But back to the problem of finding a name for Mr Boots. What we want you to do is make up a good name for him. The winner will get — thanks to Boots — an Atari ST plus Mirrorsoft's Art Director which will enable you to create your own animated figures.

Also answer the following question. What is the Robot's favourite number? You'll find the answer by watching the video.

Send your names to BOOTS Video Competition, *Computer + Video Games*, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. The closing date for entries will be June 30th.

BOOTS VIDEO COMPETITION

Name..............................Age...............................

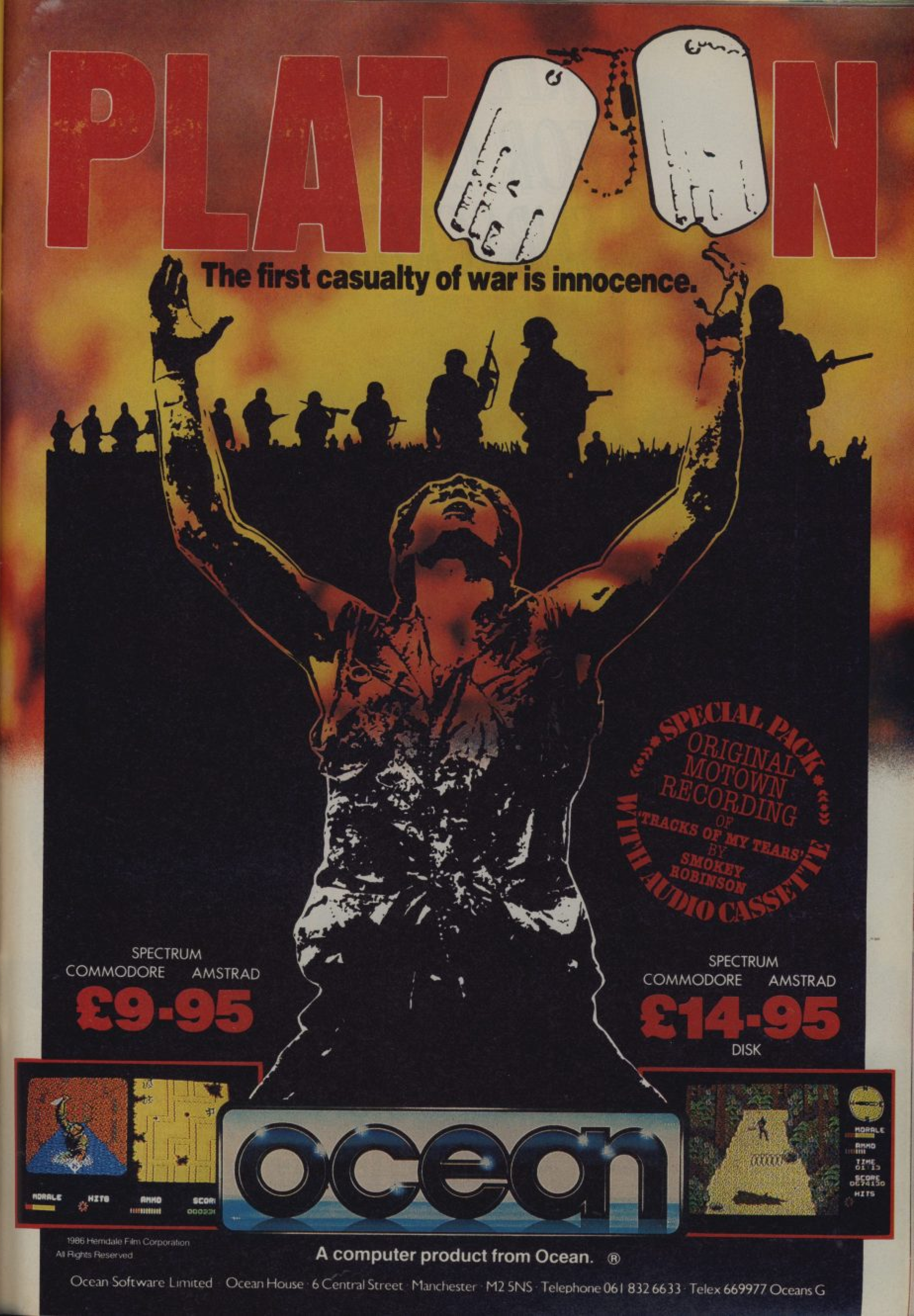
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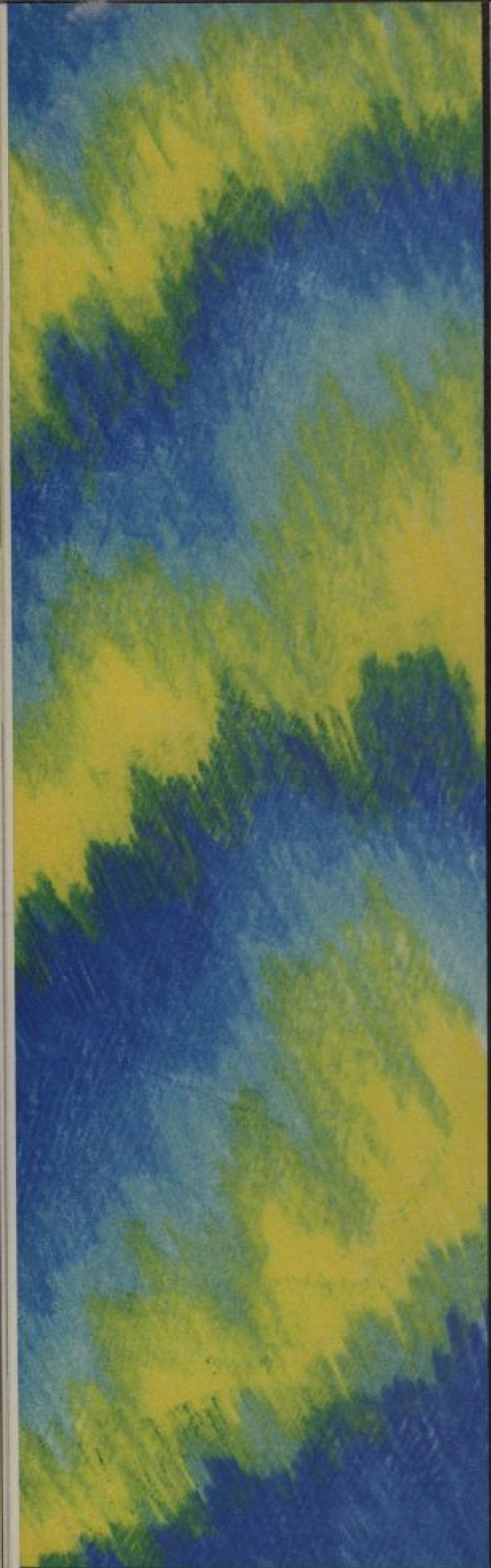
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Suggested name...

Favourite Number...


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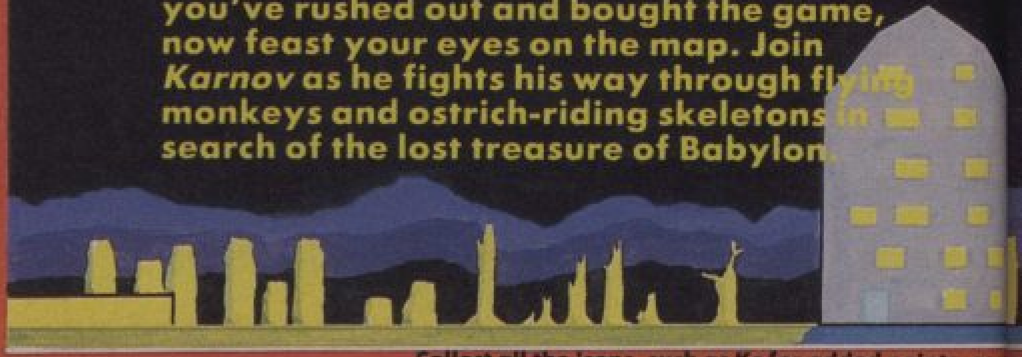
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KARNOV

Playmasters I

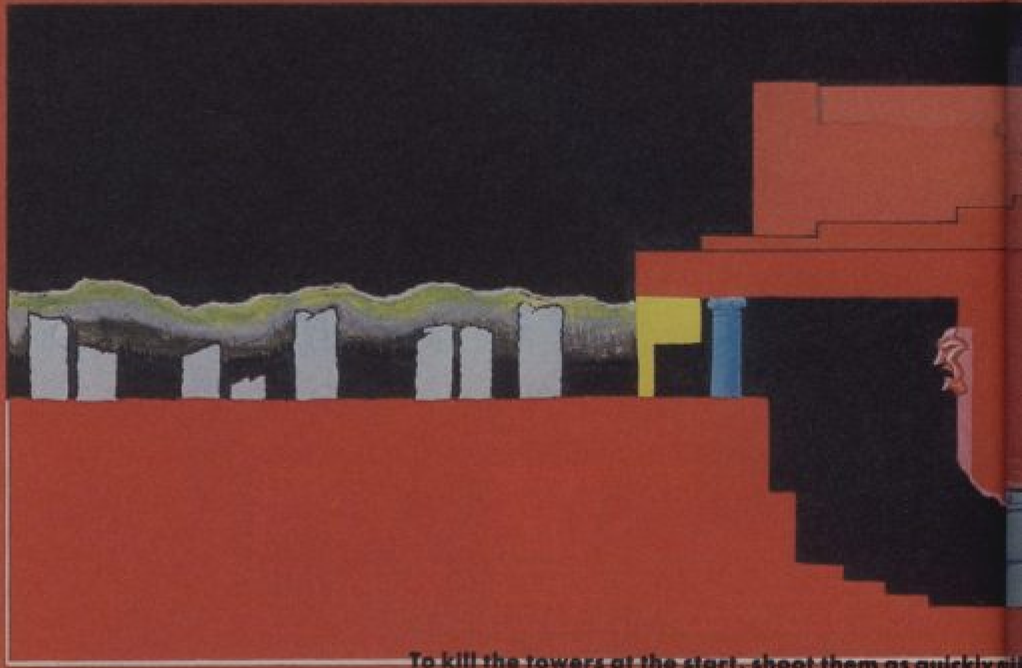


You've read the rave review, perhaps you've rushed out and bought the game, now feast your eyes on the map. Join *Karnov* as he fights his way through flying monkeys and ostrich-riding skeletons in search of the lost treasure of Babylon.



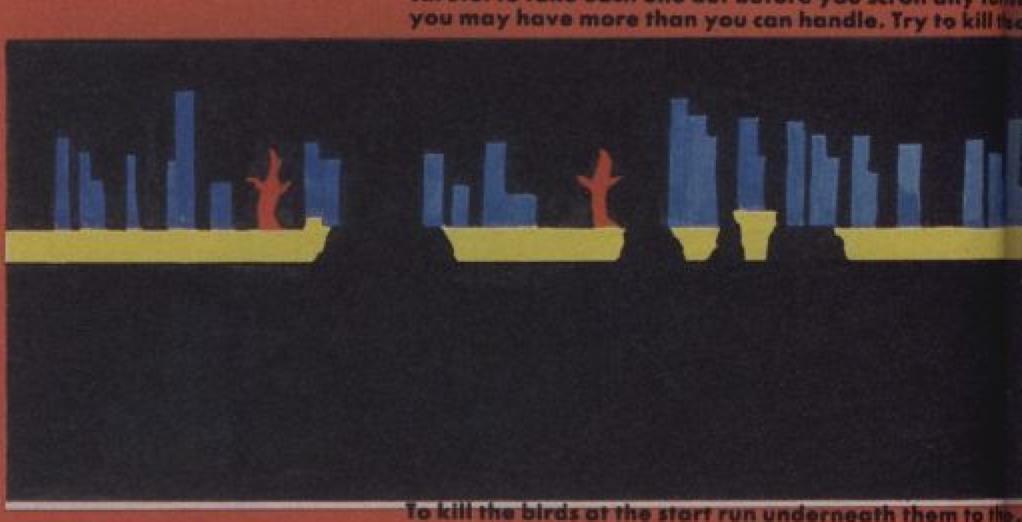
LEVEL ONE

Collect all the icons, such as Ks for added points, as
Most useful is perhaps the ladder, which you will need
some of the icons that float in the air, as well as tackle
more difficult obstacles. Take the route up the steps,



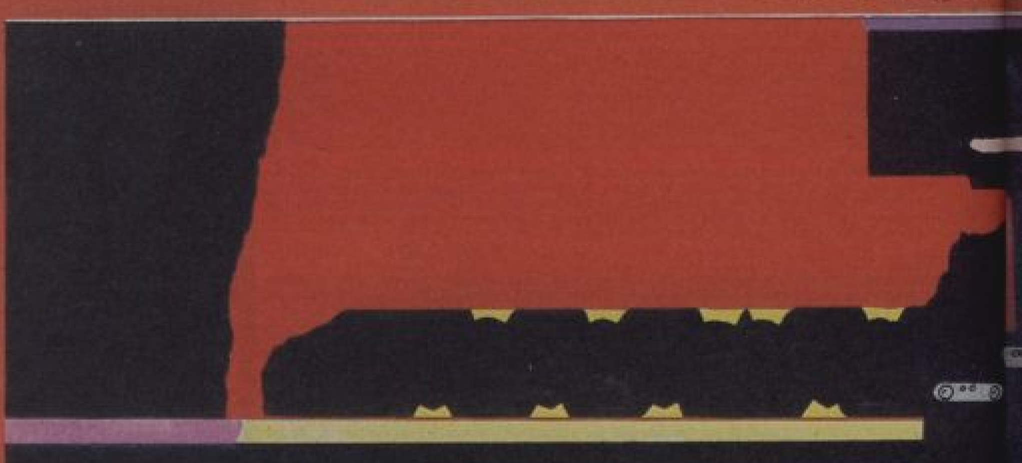
LEVEL TWO

To kill the towers at the start, shoot them as quickly
knocking out the bottom blocks from under them so
shorter. Double or triple firepower is better than any.
careful to take each one out before you scroll any fur
you may have more than you can handle. Try to kill



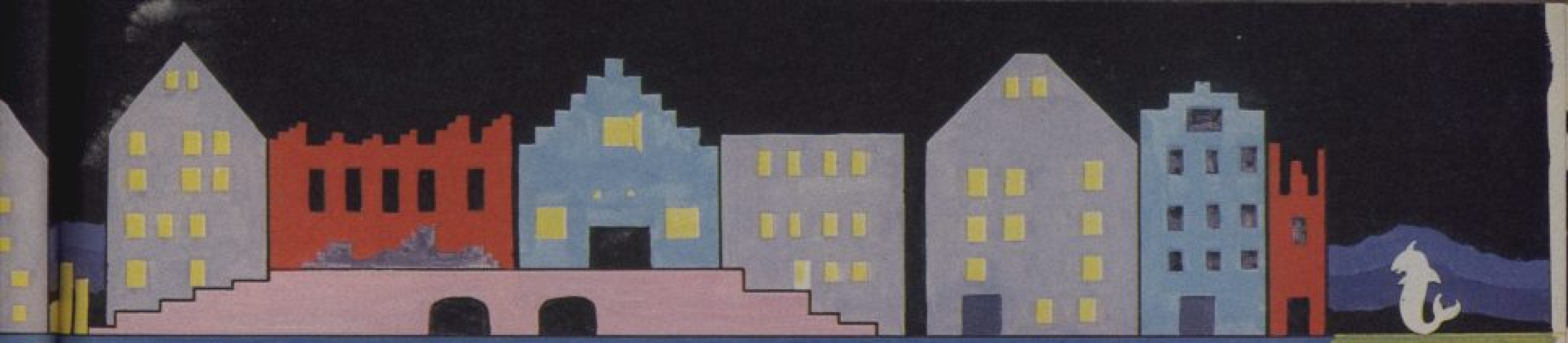
LEVEL THREE

To kill the birds at the start run underneath them to the
as you go. Climb up the tree still shooting, and you shoo
to get them all. Jump by the tree and an icon should app
of you. Jump onto it, then fall off the ledge, run left of



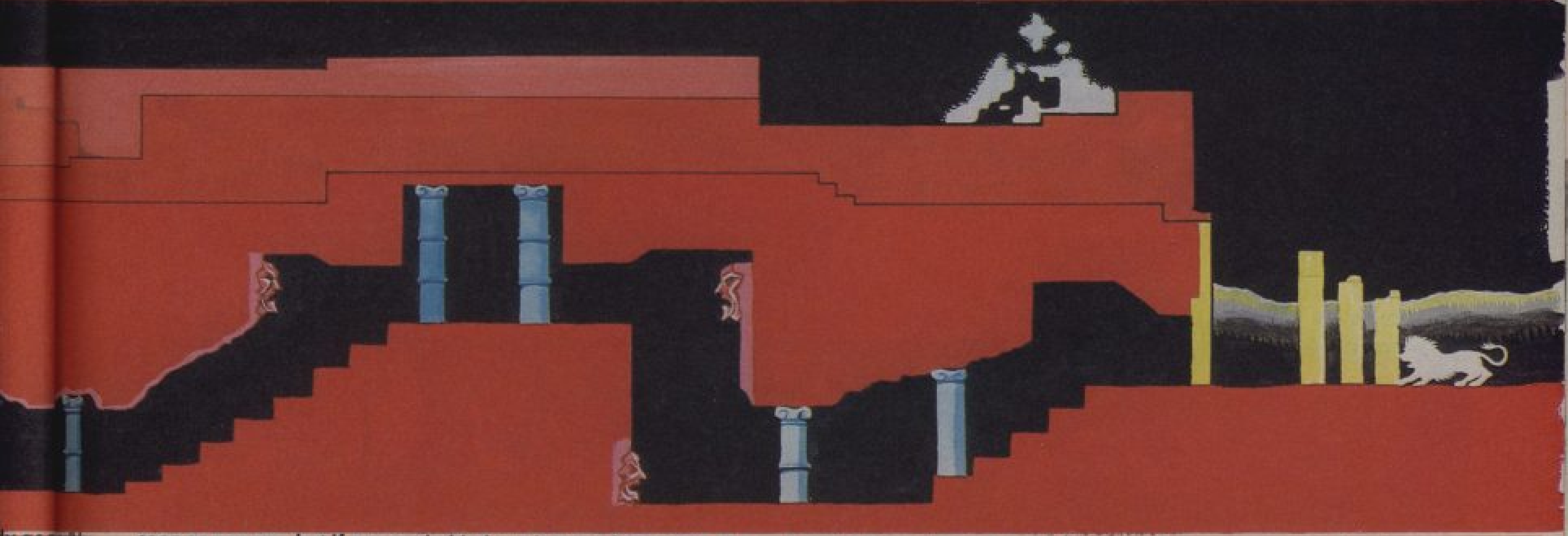
LEVEL FOUR

Just before the volcanoes climb the ladder to collect tha
icons. The volcanoes themselves are dead tough, and
excellent timing. You can bomb them, and they flash
before exploding, so you can time it. Fire at the lava



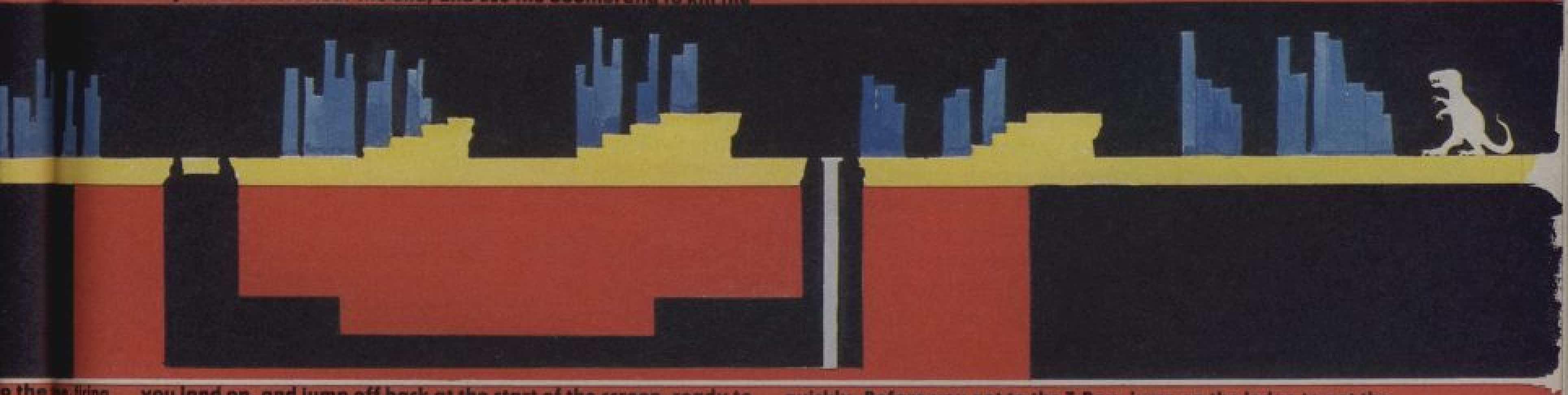
as you along.
need collect
ackle ne of the
ps, and then you

get to the end of the buildings plant your ladder right next to the last one just as the big fish comes into view. Climb up to get the floating boomerang (you need to jump from the top of the ladder to get it) and then run at the fish with it. When she moves towards you fire at her, and duck. It will get her as it circles back round if you miss first time, but watch out for further shots before she dies.



ly as possible,
so the become
any icons, but be
further on, or
ill the lead as

soon as you can, but if you get behind one it won't fire at you. The big faces take some killing and you have to be careful to jump over the fire they spew out. Watch for dangerous flying bats in between the second and third faces. Collect the icons just before the yellow towers near the end, and use the boomerang to kill the lion and the arabs at the end. If you are flying you can drop bombs on them, but otherwise duck and fire quickly, and beware, for the arabs can still fire daggers at you after the lions are dead.



o the se, firing
u should be able
d appear in front
ft along the one

you land on, and jump off back at the start of the screen, ready to get them again. You can also knock the trees over to use as bridges. To kill the mud men on the ledges, run underneath the bottom ledge, wait a while, then jump, duck, and shoot them quickly. Before you get to the T-Rex, jump on the ledge to get the boomerang, kill the birds when you get off the ledge (there are plenty of power pills around to help you), then use the boomerang on the Tyranosaurus.



ct the oating
and wi take
ash request
va bo as they

come towards you.

Double or triple fire power from the top of the stairs will kill the jumping jacks, and be careful on the difficult to negotiate conveyor belts. A boomerang is ideal to kill the Medusa, but multifire or dropping a bomb under her will also work. You can run through or jump over her to avoid her spit if needed.

Join us in a couple of pages for Part Two . . .

POKING FUN!

Ramon Bainathsah from Amsterdam sent us these pokes for the C64 all the way from Holland. First load the game, reset the computer and enter each poke separately, then press return and type SYS and the number to restart the game.

Bombjack II: Poke 7053,200: Sys 39712 for unlimited lives
Challenge of the Gobots: Poke 28798,80: Sys 16384 for unlimited lives
Exolon: Poke 7427,205: Sys 2061 for unlimited lives
Feud: Poke 16404,14: Sys 16384 to start with all ingredients
Game Over: Poke 15244,234: Poke 15245,234: Sys 2304 for unlimited lives
Head over Heels: Poke 30315,144: Poke 30316,44, Sys 324 for 90 Heads - and Heels and 90 Doughnuts
The Living Daylights: Poke 4390,238: Sys 4352 for unlimited lives

Metrocross: Poke 13501,234: Poke 13502,234: Sys 4096 for unlimited time

Nemesis (Konami): Poke 5868,255: Sys 5768 for 255 lives
Zynaps: Poke 37281,255: Sys 32769 for 255 lives
Oink: Poke 39922,165: Sys 16384 for unlimited Rubbishmen

He also sent us these tips:
The Sentinel: To reach Landscape 1318 use code 58896035
Ace II: On the High-score table type DUSTY BUG and suddenly you've - become an immortal pilot.
Mystery of the Nile: Here are the three passwords: Level 1 HD576172V: Level 2 HE576171V: Level 3 HF 576170V.
Future Knight: On the titlescreen hold down keys B U G 8 7 all at the same time. The border goes grey and you have unlimited lives
Stifflip and Co.: Enter USE ORGAN and the computer will prompt you – for some notes. Type in (without spaces) 'DEFACED' and press return. You now can play the second part.
Krakout: To activate the cheat-mode enter 'C' on the high-score table – You then get infinite lives, but no score.
Championship Wrestline: If your opponent gets you down on the floor – push forward on the joystick and press the fire button as fast as possible. Your energy zooms upwards and the opponent gets pushed off.

Winner Stays On

Hope you like Karnov, 'cos we've gone pretty much overboard on it this month. There's some other stuff as well as the mammoth maps though, with hints and tips from US Gold's very own Leaderboard champions on how to play and win, as well as a reminder of Winner Stays On and a (albeit truncated) dose of hints, tips and pokes. Back to normal next month, but in the mean time don't forget to keep sending your cheats in 'cos we'll all find them useful. Oh yes, and while you're at it, why not let me know how you think playmasters is going: what's good, what's bad, what's downright lousy. Probably what you really hate if these poxy intros, so I'll be off...now!

Tim's popped in and says if any of you have any hints and tips on how to find Melissa, he'd love to hear them. Be seeing you.
Matt

The first "Winner Stays On" contest went ahead at the end of last month, and was a roaring success!

We do have a pretty hot bunch of contenders winging their way down here to C+VG towers though, so the competition is bound to have been fast and furious. Look for the full report next month, when the lucky winner, and the sorry losers, will be revealed.

You do, of course, know what I'm talking about? Only the greatest contest in the history of video games!

Greatest because it ain't over just like that, oh no, but continues from month to month, as our champion tries to stay on in the face of all comers. I've printed another slip below for the second challenge, when we'll get a handful of you to show our champ just what computer games are all about.

As an incentive – as if you need an incentive to get your name in lights! we're giving away a whole load of goodies, including games, T-shirts, mocked up C+VG covers and an Atari ST!

Name..

Address..

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Age..

Phone..

Game	System	Score
....	....	....
....	....	....

DEFENDER OF THE CROWN

For a start the best character to become is Geoffrey Longsword, who is an excellent swordsman, and thus makes raiding pretty easy. Start in the verl light blue territory near the middle of England, which puts you quite close to the brown and the red which are two of the biggest threats. Use Robin Hood to help knock out the three Norman castles 9 Yellow, Brown and red), but try to do so when their armies are as far away as possible.

In the early versions you can get a free catapult by attacking a castle, going to the MOVE ARMY option, and then clicking on a castle. When you are attacking a fairly well defended castle, hit the castle wall six times, then use greek fire or disease (always useful when your opponent has a lot of men). For best results on the battle screen use STAND AND FIGHT or KNIGHT'S CHARGE as they give the best results.

One of the hardest sequences to win is the joust. One way to win this is to keep the mouse straight, and then hit the first button once a clang is heard. The second and more dangerous way is to aim your lance to kill your opponent's horse.

In the raiding scene, hit the mouse button quickly once your opponent has raised his sword. He will try to get you after three or four good hits. Keep the second button down until his sword goes back up, and repeat to win.

Ta to R (Richard? Robert? Come on, we're all friends here!) Henderson for these.

Matt

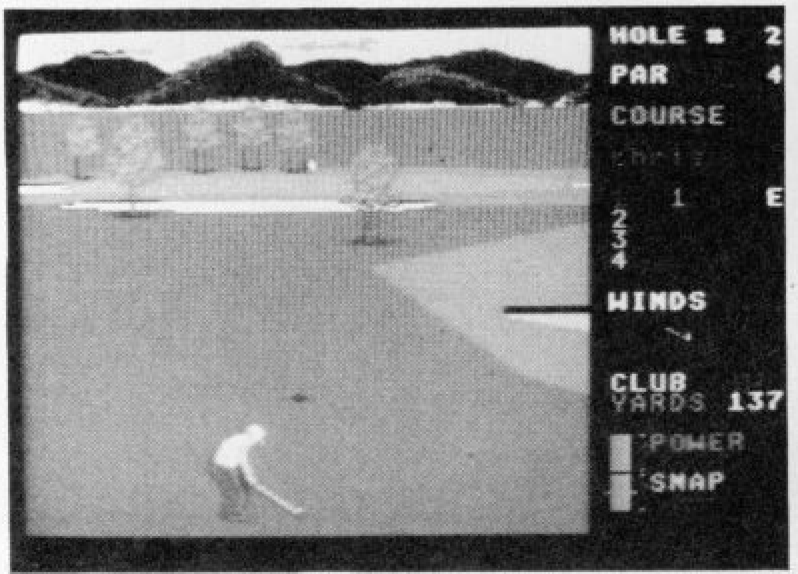

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Leaderboard Challenge

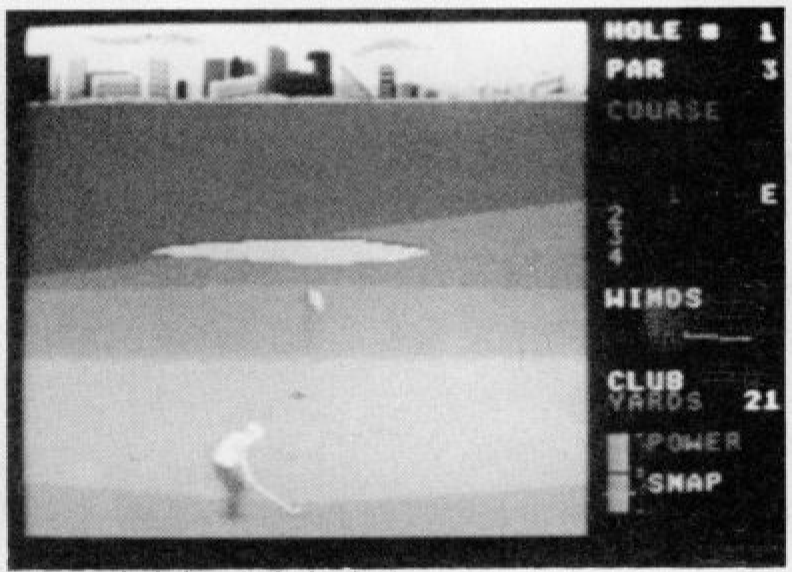
The popularity of computer golf games is amazing — and there are none more popular than the US Gold/Access game *Leaderboard*. And to prove the point, the World Class Leaderboard Computer Golf Championships were held recently.

The finals of the World Class Leaderboard Computer Golf Championships were held recently at the Belfry Golf Club near Birmingham.

Those selected to attend the championships came from all over the country to compete for the Gauntlet Novice, Amateur and Professional Challenge Cups. To mark the event, the American originator of the *Leaderboard* series, Bruce Carver, flew in from Salt Lake City, Utah, for the presentation.



▲ Drive time down the fairway.



▲ Down the hole or in the bunker?

The winner of the novice round was Simon Stewart, of Lanarkshire, who won 10 golf lessons with the professional at his local golf club.

The amateur cup was won by Mark Hyman, of London, who also received a full set of Jack Nicklaus clubs. The winner of the professional cup was Chris Dale, from Sheffield, who won a full set of Ping golf clubs.

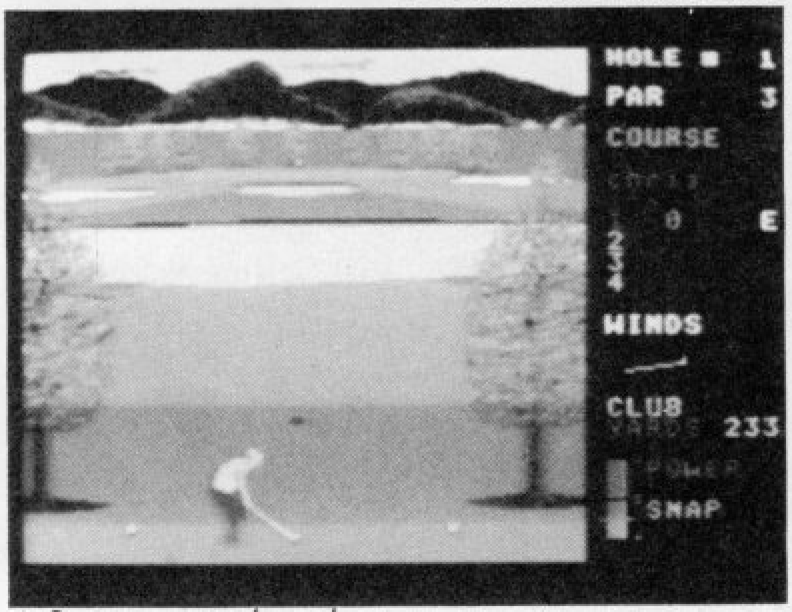
And the Leaderboard champs have come up with the following hints and tips to help your golf game.

Chris Dale, Winner of the Professional Cup, (Commodore 64):

- Make a comprehensive chart of *your own* for distances of each club using the driving range option e.g.: (a) Long+Short. (b) Long+Short with 'P' etc . . .

Also, when approaching the green on shots under 130 yards, use your own short distances, this gives you a better chance of getting the ball in the hole! For example, 129 yards=3 wood short only have the resistor just below the half-way mark of the power indicator.

- Always hit slightly long over water, taking the wind factor into account.



▲ Beware a watery hazard.

- Add about 40 yards when hitting from the rough, this would depend on wind strength and direction.
- Use Hook and Slice to get around obstacles.
- If in dense trees use P, and always use P when hitting from the rough immediately around the putting green, less than 30 Yards.

And here are few tips from amateur champion Mark Hyman.

- The Power Snap Indicator — Learn to fade (controlled slice), and draw (controlled hook) the ball at will. This is very useful on holes 1 to 5.
- Playing out of Rough ● Remember, allow two more clubs if playing from near to the fairway and three more clubs if further into the rough.
- Learn to punch the ball — very useful if you find yourselves in the trees.
- Water Hazards. If the trees in the foreground hide water in the background, the ball will land in the water, without penalty to the player.
- Chipping around the green ● Learn to punch with the PW, and practise to work out how far each shot will go. From the rough, a PW hit at full power will cover 31 yards.

US Gold plans to release a commerative package called *The Leaderboard Collection*. For the Commodore 64 the including original *Leaderboard*, *Leaderboard Tournament*, *Executive Leaderboard*, *World Class Leaderboard;* for the Spectrum and Amstrad it will include *Leaderboard*, *Leaderboard Tournament*, and World Class *Leaderboard*.

If you have any useful *Leaderboard* hints and tips send them to Playmasters, Computer + Video Games, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Frightmare Giveaway

YOU! Shut-up, sit-up and listen good. This is Grotbags yelling – sorry – talking. You know me. I'm the witch from Emu's Pink Windmill Show.

Anyway, enough of this drivel. The other day I was invited to attend the launch of a rather evil little game called *Frightmare* by Cascade. Well, they chose a really spooky pub cellar for a bit of a binge. It was really great. In a fit of generosity – it was the drink – they decided to give a load of creepy-crawlie goodies to C + VG Readers. Not only that they sat me down and made me sign a lucky for you 13 posters which I'm giving away. And all for nothing!

That rather nice young deputy editor from C + VG, Paul Boughton – such a pleasant character, full of fun, helpful, contented with his lot – is looking after them right now. So you can be sure they are safe.

All you have to do is write into the Great Grotbags Frightmare Giveaway, Computer + Video Games, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. All the entries will be put into the hat and the lucky names pulled out will be a winner.

Besides the 13 posters, I've got seven skulls, two bats, five pumpkin-headed creatures, one set of vampire teeth (new), three big black snakes, one small white snake and seven cobwebs up for grabs.



GROTBAGS GREAT FRIGHTMARE GIVEAWAY

NAME ______________________

ADDRESS ______________________

____

____

Playmasters Map



Welcome back to Karnov. There's no point messing around, you've had a breather in the land of pokes and stuff, so let's get straignt stuck in. Some mean swimming involved here so deep breath, here we go . . .

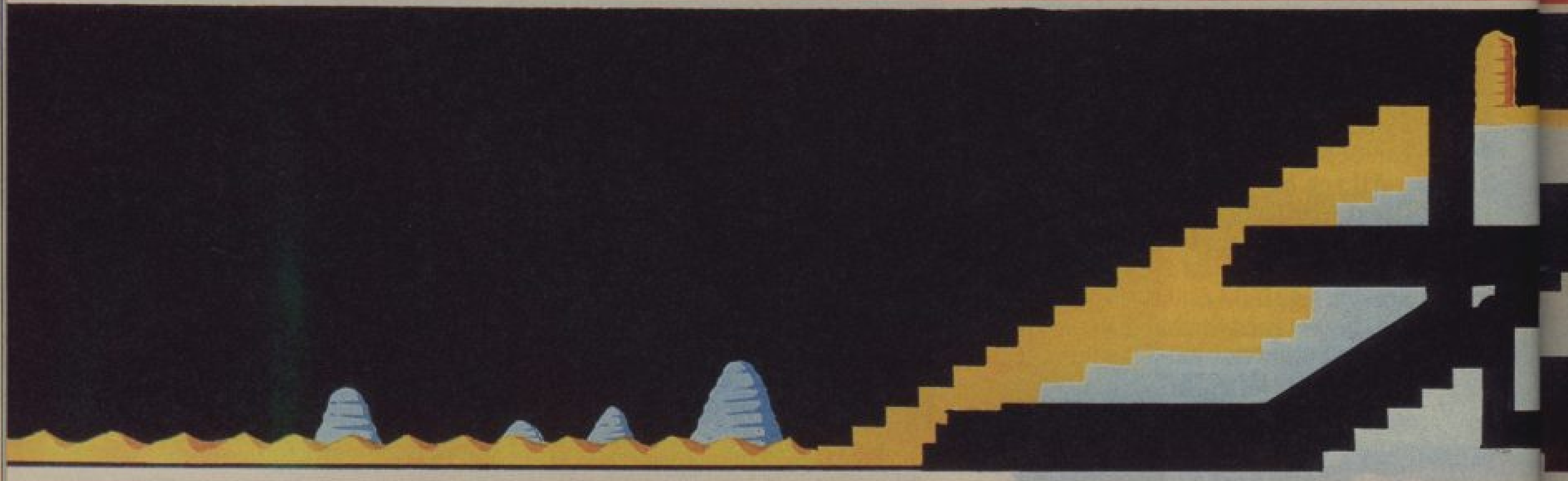
LEVEL FIVE

Almost right away you get faced with a whole load of underwater men armed with spears. Try to outswim them, but if this fails then swim to the top of the water and fire. There



LEVEL SIX

More of these ridiculous land based fish to take out, I'm afraid. To get past the one at the towers try to ignore them and run up each ladder, but jump when you reach the top to avoid the last fish. Kill one fish at a time (we're talking about the fish at the base of the tower here folks) and plant a bomb



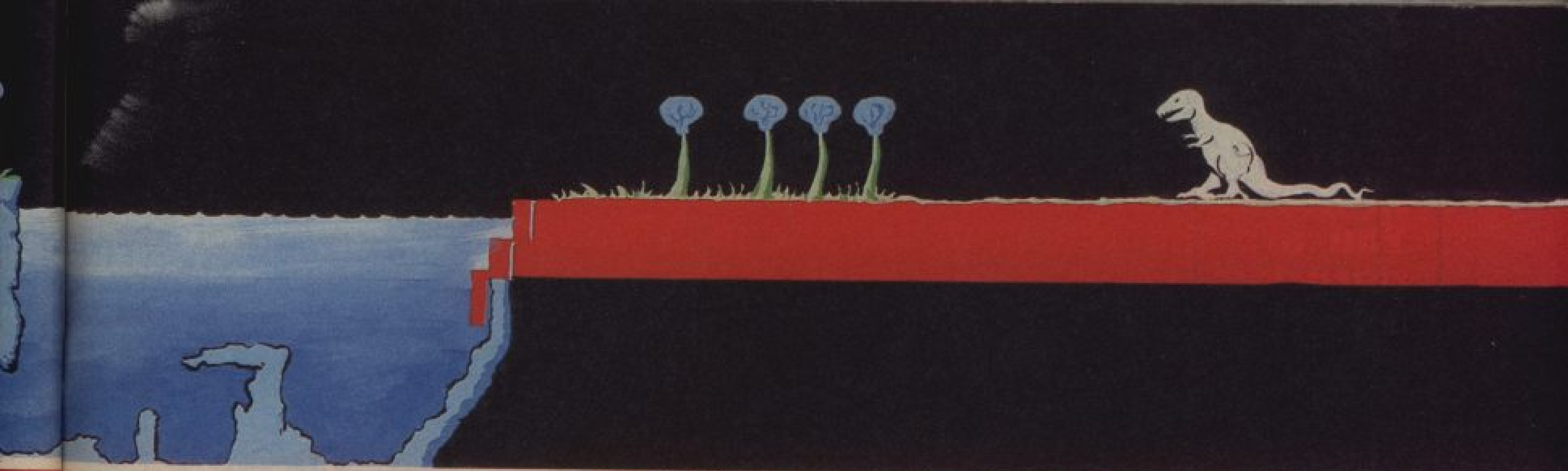
LEVEL SEVEN

There's a Hydra to face near the beginning. To kill it, activate it and then go down the steps as far as possible. You should be able to stand still without being shot, then jump between the Hydra's bullets while firing all the time. It takes a lot of hits to finish him though! Watch out for the floor disappearing after you've shot him.

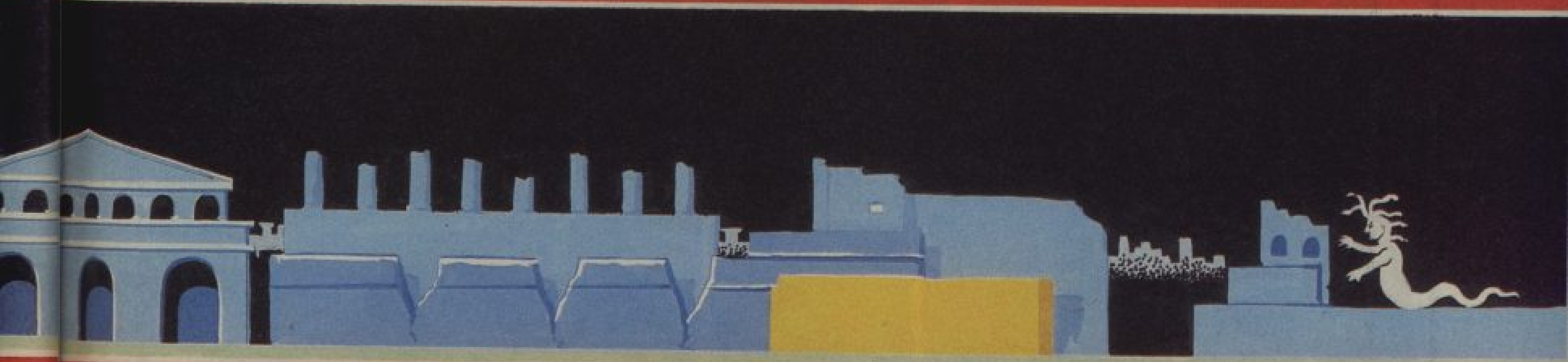


LEVEL EIGHT

To kill the stone figures that fire at you, shoot at their eyes while jumping or crouching to avoid the nasty 'ol flames they send shooting in your direction. To kill the Ents – which are the things that look sort of like tree stumps as all you true



are also a load of clams along the bottom. Wait until they open fire quickly. You may be out of the water, but you're not out of the woods yet. There's still the giant dinosaur guardian at the end to beat.



at the base to blow the strut down.

To kill the owls just keep firing while avoiding his shots, and on the fourth shot the owl will explode. Don't get too near though! At the end of the level there are more Medusas to get rid of. Trigger the first, kill it, then jump by the figure ehad to get a power pill (it looks like an apple). trigger the last Medusa, get the power pill and jump backwards to avoid the figure head firing. Kill the last Medusa to finish the level.



It is also possible to kill the Hydra by standing just to the right of the spinning floor (you'll know what I mean when you see it) but you will have to jump to avoid one of the shots.

Next up is a good old T Rex. Trigger him off, kill the bat, and fire, trying to avoid the flames. Go to where the hydra was and drop a bomb through the hole just before you drop through yourself. Obviously you have to avoid being hit by the T Rex flames and the bat.

There is also a boulder which you have to avoid being splatted by. The way to do this is to crouch on the step.



Tolkien fans must know – fire at them (of course!) but watch out! They do fight back, by firing a streak along the floor occasionally. There's another Tyrannosaur to send to it's maker., and then you're scot free. Of course there's still Level Nine and the final confrontation with the wizard to come, but I'm afraid you're on your own with that one . . .

GET INTO CRIME!

In the late 1990's the streets of New York are a jungle. You are the ice cool leader of a gang of drug crazed terrorists. Your main goal is to become the richest, toughest and most notorious gang in the city.



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KJC GAMES, PO BOX 11, CLEVELEYS, BLACKPOOL, LANCS FY5 2UL.

Play By Mail

Wayne back again with the latest in Play-By-Mail. Don't worry about missing anything, I've got it all licked!

TURN TROUBLE

The Laboratory, who brought you *Further Into Fantasy*, have had problems with the mail recently, so you may have had problems with turns.

The main reason for this is that they have moved premises and most of the mail sent to their old address has been destroyed by the mysterious new occupier.

The new address is 18 Ridge Nether Moor, Liden, Swindon, Wilts.

Speaking of the Lab, they have released a new product *Magelords Of Doom...The Second Generation.* This is a totally computer-moderated game that is set on FIF's old hunting ground...the planet Dorm.

In fact the game has many similarities to FIF as the gods and the NPC's are virtually the same. The main difference in this game is you control a large army to complete a simple task that your deity has allocated. The task in question is to wipe out the other 49 players and prove your total supremacy of the globe.

As you can see it is an interesting concept and well worth a look. Once again by exposing my body to drastic alcohol abuse, I have persuaded The Lab to enter the realms of the pay before you play brigade and this means that EVERYONE who writes into me at C + VG enclosing the column heading (or a photocopy) and a s.s.a.e. will receive: A Free Start Up; A Free Rulebook; Two FREE Turns. This means a total saving of over £5.00.

CITIZEN MUTANTS

Moving on now to *Citizen*, a new PBM,that will certainly stir the imagination, if not the emotions. It is a hand-moderated roleplaying game, that is set on the planet Mersey Tanner in3288.

The last civilised continents have split into two directly opposite governments, namely communist and fascist, whose aims are the same: world domination. Centuries of nuclear and germ warfare have taken their toll, as apart from the two domed fortress cities, the rest of the land is barren radioactive wasteland filled with all sorts of mutated lifeforms.

You play one of the ten types of genetic available, whose aim is to bring down and destroy the enemy government.

Although I have only played a couple of rounds, it is clear that the game offers a wide choice for many different kinds of players. The rounds are well written, interesting and atmospheric.

Overall, if you can ignore the spelling mistakes and are sci fi minded then you should enjoy this game. I have managed to secure a special offer for C + VG readers, which is as follows: Set up in *Citizen* is usually £5.00, but if you write into me at C + VG with a cheque for £3.50 made payable to Mersey Tanner Productions, you will receive a rulebook, a set up, PLUS £6.00 worth of credit in your account. Further turns are £2.00 each.

G.M's WANTED!!

Have you ever fancied working as a G.M. for a leading P.B.M. company? Well, now you have the chance, as several big companies are looking for potential candidates. Mitregames, Sloth Enterprises, Pheonix games and Jade Games are all seeking new G.Ming talent. So if you can write, have an active imagination and an experience in playing role-playing games, then drop me a line and I will pass it on. The only conditions that have been laid down to me are that Jade would like to hear from someone who is over 20 and Pheonix want someone who can use a word processor.

CRIMSON SUN RISES

Talking of Pheonix games, they have re-vamped their single character F.R.P. *Lands Of the Crimson Sun* recently. They have a new rulebook, which is vastly superior to the old one, and I suspect printed on a lazer printer.

This game is ready made for those of you who like your fantasy liberally sprinkled with reality, whereby magic is very rare and viewed upon with suspicion with the local populace. If you are interested please drop me an s.s.a.e. with a cheque made payable to the company for £5.00. For this you get start up, rulebook and three free rounds. Further rounds are £1.50.

CHAOS RULES

Odde Fellowes and Co, has come up with a brand new game called *Order Of Chaos*. I do not have enough space for full details, but the basis of the game is this. Imagine a certain god at the beginning of creation. He labours for six days creating the basics of a world: Sun, stars, seas, land etc and on the seventh he decides to have a rest and put evolution into your hands.

There will be a charge of £5.00 to offset the costs of running the playtest and to discourage timewasters. However, you do not need to send any money now. For further details just send a S.S.A.E. to C + VG and when the playtest is set up you will be sent details and invited to take part.

SHEER SPECULATION

Waveney Games is an up and coming P.B.M. company that runs the excellent roleplaying P.B.M. *Delenda est Carthalgo*, a game which will be reviewed in the not too distant future. Judith Proctor, the head honcho at Waveney, has written to me to say they have just released a new computer moderated P.B.M. called *Speculate*.

Basically, *Speculate* is a game for ten players who start off with £12,000 each and is won by the first player who becomes a millionaire.

The game has a fixed deadline of ten day intervals, startup is £5.00 and turns are £1.24 per turn.

Waveney Games have kindly offered a free rulebook to any C + VG reader who provides me with a 9½ by 6½ S.S.A.E. Interested? Then drop me a line.

WAR ZONE

Ancient Empires and *Conquest of the Stars* are the latest computer moderated American imports by Nova productions. *Empires* is a 100 man per unit-level correspondence war game of diplomacy, production, economics and conquest with a liberal amount of tactics and strategy thrown in.

Stars is a futuristic space war game, based on the same basis as *Empires*, but brought forward to the 23rd century. Once again, diplomacy, economics and combat is essential as you manoeuvre your way to the position of Galactic leader.

Rulebooks and start up fees in each case total £4.00 and you will get a free turn if you join via C + VG. All cheques made payable to Nova Productions Ltd. Please note at the time of printing the turn round fee was not known.

Keeping with wargames, Whitegold Games have also obtained the rights to run two American computerized games in the UK, namely *Balance Of Power* and *Fog Of War*.

If you apply for either game via *C + VG* you will get: a start up in *Power* for £5.00 plus a free turn; a start up in *War* for £6.00 plus a free turn.

Wayne here with more Fantasy Role Playing news, views and reviews, including Standard Games' new MEGA system way, thanks for the massive amount of mail. But DON'T stop. I want to know what YOU want from the F.R.P. column. Remember, it's your column. Use it or lose it!

FANtASy

Samurai Blades

► SAMURAI BLADES
► PUBLISHER: STANDARD GAMES.
► PRICE: £9.95.
► RATING: 80%

Standard Games have done it again! With the release of *Samurai Blades*, they have unleashed a game based on Japanese fuedal warfare which satisfies two of the most important points in the gaming world – good value for money and simplicity of play.

The game caters for two players, or teams, who control armies of men whom fight on a man to man basis in an early style of Japanese armed combat.

Upon opening the superbly illustrated box, you immediately notice this game contains a great deal for your money. The contents consist of a large sheet of full colour character counters, a well moulded twenty sided dice, two large full colour maps, three booklets, a clear plastic counter try and a couple of handy, quick reference playsheets.

The maps and character counters are just beautiful. They have been created in the traditional Standard mould, being clearly printed in many colours on top quality paper. Moving onto the booklets for a moment, these cover four specific areas which are: The rules of play, historical background, playing pieces and the scenarios.

First of all you should read through the rulebook to get the general idea of the game, then you should re-read it for a more thorough inspection to ensure that you fully understand the rules.

For the record, the rules are very easy to understand and precisely written. Even novice players shouldn't have any problems. They cover the basic combat concepts initially, including archery (both mounted and on foot), the effect of terrain and barracades, but, if you require them, you can move on to the more advanced rules that cover Seppuku (glorious suicide), deflection of missiles by monks, Shuriken (five pointed star) throwing by Ninjas and night combat.

The next booklet deals with the historical aspects of feudal Japan and the playing pieces. The historic research that has gone into the game is impressive. It covers such topics as the land of Nippon in general, then moves on to cover The Emperor, Shoguns, Daimyos (Heads of Clans), Samurai, Ninjas and Monks to name but a few. The pieces are then described and allocated to which group they belong.

The scenarios booklet contains six adventures for your armies to engage in conflict. They range from the simple "Ambush" to the more complicated "Night of the Ninja".

They are all well written and entertaining to play.



▲ *Samurai Blades – feudal fantasy.*

Mega

► **MEGA ROLE-PLAYING SYSTEM (FANTASY EDITION).**
► **PUBLISHER: MEGA GAMES LTD.**
► **PRICE: £9.99.**
► **RATING: 75%**

It has been quite a while since someone has had the confidence, belief and conviction to issue a new F.R.P. system, which deals with nebulous world of sword and sorcery.

The main reason is the *tremendous* competition out there. To go up against the big boys like T.S.R., who market both versions of *Dungeons and Dragons*, plus Games Workshop, who publish *Runquest III*, takes a lot of nerve and even more financial backing.

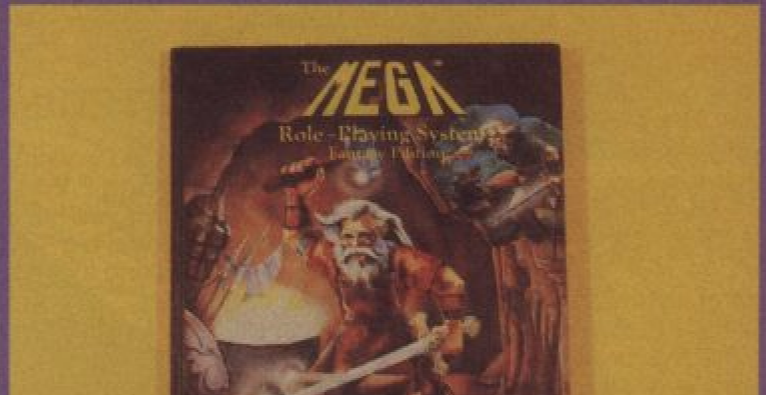
However Norwegians, Isy Allon and Ben Brakas have taken that bold step and they bring you the *MEGA Role Playing System*, which they claim has been "developed due to disatisfaction with the games available at present."

In a nutshell they have tried to steer clear of all the annoying parts of other famous F.R.P. games, including the combat system, dice rolling, magic and character creation to name a few and create their own alternative. Then they have combined their finished product with the elementary "basics" of role-playing, which include monsters, animals, gods etc, and smoothed off the rough edges which some nice points to see in a decent F.R.P. game, and voila. The question is: Does it work?

The answer is Yes – after a fashion:

Overall, I thought it was a good product. I liked the way the character creation is easy to understand and complete. It gives your character more of an indepth personality, which makes it easier to role plaqy. You also get a clear cut description of a characteris quirks, which can be anything from having a bad sturret to being downright beligerent.

Furthermore, I liked the way the hit location system works. Turning to the magic system, the concept on which it is based is quite believable, with



▲ *MEGA – a refreshing change.*

Role Playing

potential priests having to go through initiation ceremonies, as well as having their actions judged on in respect of the cult standingm, while wizards try to draw their magic from actual knowledge plus a combination of willpower.

The system is also "open" to a certain extent, as you are invited to modify and expand it as you see fit. This is a nice touch and with the right amount of effort and skill you could be running a totally unique system!

On the minus side too much number crunching for my liking. The designers have admitted the combat system is not designed for "the hack and slay brigade", however, it is not designed for speed either. The idea behind it was good, but I felt there was a little to much work involved for sustained combat interest.

Another thing that struck a sour note was the package. Apart from the cover, the rest of the artwork in the book is appealing. It is probably the worst artwork I have seen in a professional F.R.P. system. Another annoying point is that the book is liberally sprinkled with large reference tables. I would have liked to have seen these nicely tucked away in the back. Finally the "S-Dice" system, on which the whole MEGA system becomes tedious and time consuming after a while.

All that said, I believe that both players and G.M.s will have a good time playing this game, if they stick with it and make the basic for their campaigns. They will be able to modify it to their own needs and dispose of any aspects that they dislike. I would recommend it for players who have had at least a fair amount of role-playing experience, as it may prove a bit of a struggle for novices.

I found it made a refreshing and interesting change from the usual FRP campaigns and was well worth the effort expended playing it.

News

Games Workshop have issued *City Block* and *Warhammer F.R.P. Character pack*.

The former is a supplement for the Judge Dredd R.P.G. but it can easily be adapted to run in conjunction with other games.

For your money you receive



▲ Character Pack.



▲ Citi-Block.

eight full colour floor plan sheets, which are highly-detailed and very well drawn, four full colour card cut out accessory sheets, which comprise of everything from furniture to road vehicles and a 20 page booklet.

There are also a lot of interesting charts, where you can randomly generate an infinite variety of fixtures fittings and you can create your relevant scenarios based around this. You are really only limited by your own imagination!

At the back of the rulebook there is a section informing you how the contents can also be used with *Warhammer 40,000* (WH 40K), which was reviewed in April's C + VG. There is even some additional rules for WH 40K thrown in as well, which I thought was a nice little touch.

On the whole I thought that *City Block* was well worth the £5.99 G.W. are asking for it and it is a must for any serious player of *Judge Dredd* or WH 40K.

Moving on to the *Warhammer Fantasy Character* pack now, I admit to finding myself nicely surprised. You see when I first looked at the product, I thought it was just going to be a load of character generation sheets stuck together and wrapped up in celophane.

However when I opened it, not only did I find 50 character sheets, but there was a 16 page pamphlet enclosed as well.

Without a doubt this is an essential part to the *Warhammer Fantasy* game and if you play it then you should get a character pack now. Even if you don't play it, it is worth lashing out the £3.99 to have an education in character generation!

Standard Games have produced three aptly named Standard Pads, which are universal accessories for any major role playing system. The most interesting item is the role-playing character sheets, which come in a pad of 50 that are A4 in size. The aim behind this is release is to save you a lot of valuable roleplaying time by giving you a well designed character sheet that makes any referencing quick and easy. Another is an A4 sheet of small hexes and the other is Macro hex paper, which contains a huge hex, broken down into smaller hexes.

All three pads sell at £1.95 and are available in all local hobby shops.

Letters

• Can you recommend any FRP games that deal with comic strip characters and the like please?.
Steven Dodd,
Lincoln.

Wayne says: Choose from any of the following: Villains and Vigilantes, and Daredevils by Fantasy Games Unlimited at £5.95 for the rules or £10.95 for a full boxed set, or if you want to go for the really copy cat stuff try Marvel Superheroes or DC Heroes issued by the respective companies around about £12.95. I believe there is another game called Golden Heroes around, but I can't find any up to date info about it.

• Can you recommend any RPG that covers the world in the 21st Century after a nuclear holocaust
Barry Deacon,
Penzance.

Wayne says: The two I recommend are Twilight 2000 by Games Designers Workshop at £14.95 and The Price Of Freedom by Games Workshop, which is about the same price. Both games are fairly complex and not cheap, but they are very factual, as far as they can be, and well thought out. 2000 has the edge in my view, mainly because it has lots of supportive material. I will be reviewing them both shortly.

ARCADE

And you thought that Out Run won the ultimate racing experience! Arcade Action tests the hottest drawing game of the moment, Continental Circus and gets dead Hope in it's sights.

• CONTINENTAL CIRCUS

Racing games have entered a new dimension with Taito's wonderful *Continental Circus,* the world's first three dimensional racing simulation.

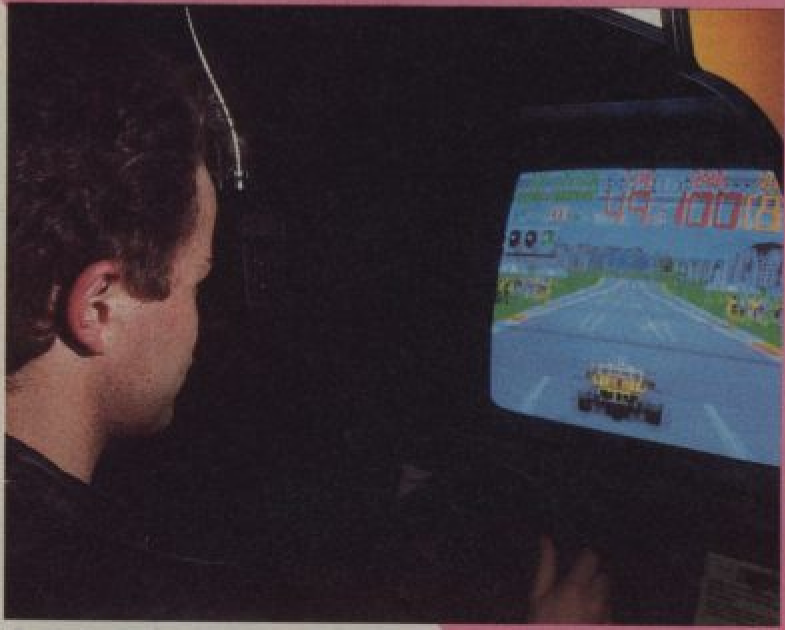
The most amazing thing is that it actually works. Sitting in the cabinet you can feel the roar of your engines, the stomach churning swoop as you crest a hill and the road undulating and disappearing into the next tight bend.

The game itself is similar to most racing sims dating back to *Pole Position.* But with its unique and stunningly realistic 3D effect together with some additional features, like pitstops, *Continental Circus* is a world class of its own. And it costs only 30 pence a go, too.

Eight grand prix tracks are out there just waiting for you to take the wheel. Eight twisting circuits, full of hazards which will need all your skill to negotiate. One of the problems you will run into is oversteering. The wheel is incredibly sensitive and it's all to easy to put your Formula One car into a fatal spin. When that happens, as it no doubt will, several things could occur. Most likely you'll just spin and your back end will go up in smoke – pit stop quick. Or, if you're really unlucky, you'll crash into another car and bounce down the track spinning uncontrollably end over end to be annihilated in the most spectacular explosion I've ever seen.

▼ *Taking racing games into the third dimension!*





▲ *Matt's in the driving seat, and he's loving it!*

With a great whoosh, the car explodes into a ball of flame while wheels, spoilers and other parts shoot out of the fireball straight for you. The first time it happens you'll instinctively duck. It's the most incredible feeling.

And while I'm going on about effects, just the act of driving round the hilly tracks gives you butterflies in your stomach. As you approach each one, the view from the dashboard changes flattening as you crest the hill. The only way I can describe it is like that great stomach dropping feeling when you're in a car and take a hump-back bridge too fast. The 3D effect does exactly the same.

Watching the game as an observer is very trying as you can see the split images which only come together when you're in the driving seat.

Now back to the race. Each course has to be completed in a time limit, you start off with 60 seconds and at the two Extend gates on the track you're given a further 30 seconds plus any time you have accrued. You also start off with a rating of 100 points and to complete the race successfully you must go over the finishing line at that track's qualifying rating. If you don't get the points, you'll have to drive that race again.

The first race is the Brazil Grand Prix which has a rating of 80 qualifying points. So you must earn at least 20 points by the time you zoom past the chequered flag. Points are earned on a quick start, overtaking other cars and staying out of trouble. A pit stop only lasts a second or two but during that time your points creep up. Crashing doesn't do you any good and points are earned while you wait for a new car to be brought onto the track. The same goes when you flip into a spin.

The remaining tracks take you to Grand Prixs in the USA – 60 qualifying points, France – 50 points, Monaco – 40 points, W Germany – 30 points, Spain – 20 points, Mexico – 10 points and finally Japan which qualifies at a mere three points. Luckily *view is cool.*



▲ *Ray Bans eat your heart out! 3D glasses may not be trendy, but the view is cool.*

you don't revert to 100 points on each new track, but carry your points with you. The only way to ensure you get to qualify for Japan is to beat the qualifying points for each new track with some to spare. That way you have a buffer zone and don't have to work so hard.

At some time during each race you'll be called into the pits, normally to have billowing clouds of smoke extinguished. It's not a good idea to ignore pitstops in this case as you'll find the smoke will rapidly burst into flames which totally destroys your car in an earth shattering explosion. Pitstops are to be found straight after the Extend gates and if you miss one you'll just have to hope that you can make it to the next in time. On several occasions I crashed into the oil drums lining the pits on the way in, losing valuable time and spinning uncontrollably past the lifesaving mechanics.

The mechanics are superfast and will put you right in no time at all, talking all the while in superbly clear speech. 'OK', they yell, 'over here' as you scream in for a tyre change. Then it's 'go, go, go' as you roar out to enter the fray again.

After playing masses of straight racing sims, *Continental Circus* took a bit of time getting used to. However, after a short break my eyes out used to the new perspective – one which works remarkably well as another gimmick to draw the crowds.

CLARE EDGELEY

ACTION

DEAD ANGLE

The arcades have never been short of games to appeal to players who just love to blast the hell out of anything and everything that the trigger happy maniac could want – bullets, bloodshed and blasting.

The game is very much in the mould of *Operation Wolf* and Infrgrames' computer game *Prohibition*. You are depicted as by a 'wire-frame' outline on the screen, the view of the gangsters' hideouts scroll left, right, up and down with the movement of your gun sight.

Of course you need a reason for your murderous activities (you don't?) and the game's scenario provides one – a kidnapped girlfriend! The game begins with your girlfriend being abducted from outside a café in Napoli and bundled into a car driven by several mean looking gangsters.

It's here that you begin your task of rescuing the girl and taking your revenge on the gang members at the café. You only have a simple hand gun and a supply of three hand grenades to help you to despatch all the criminals. The gunmen don't give you an easy time, they appear from doorways, jump from windows and hide behind upturned tables, tossing the odd grenade or two in your direction.

Some of the villains are fairly easy to pick off, needing only one bullet to put out their lights. Tougher gang members need several shots and the big boss himself can only be brought down in a hail of bullets.

Many of the gang members tote much more powerful weapons than yourself – sawn-off shotguns and machine guns included. If you manage to pick off one of these guys you get the chance to pick their weapon up. The gun is displayed on part of the screen and you must 'click' your gun over it and you've got yourself a new weapon. Unfortunately you only have one hundred rounds in the machine gun so the bloodshed never lasts as long as you'd like. Shame!

The machine gun, the shotgun and the grenades are very useful for getting to gangsters that are hiding behind tables, barrels and bullet proof windows – they blast everything away, including the unlucky mobster.

At the bottom of the screen there are two energy meters which display the numbers of men left in the particular Family of gangsters you are trying to destroy. The other meter displays how much 'lifeforce' you have remaining. It's funny, but your lifeforce also seems to drop very much more quickly than the other one. Strange . . !

Once you've managed to get rid of the first gang – you'll almost certainly need to make use of the game's extended play feature to get far – you are then transported to a dockyard scene in Napoli. Most of the action takes place on an Ocean liner docked in the harbour.

The graphics of the boat are excellent and the effect of your machine gun ripping holes in the ship's hull and smashing through windows has been very expertly executed. This level is a lot more difficult, your intended victims are much more adept at ducking, diving and hiding behind solid objects . . . chucking the odd grenade, of course.

If you complete thie level, a map of the woorld is displayed and you board the ship and are whisked across the Atlantic to New York City. Again the fighting begins in the dockyards but this time you have to deal with a huge warehouse full of oil barrels – and gangsters. Shoot the barrels and you often find some money to pick up – other times the barrels are full of petrol and explode into flames – the graphics are, as always, excellent.

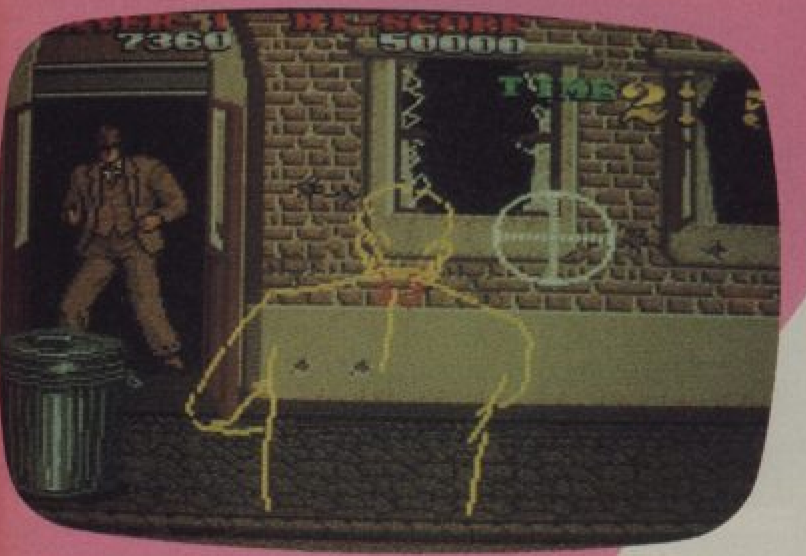
Dead Angles two most impressive features are its graphics and animation and the its addictiveness – the kind you only get with real blast 'em ups.

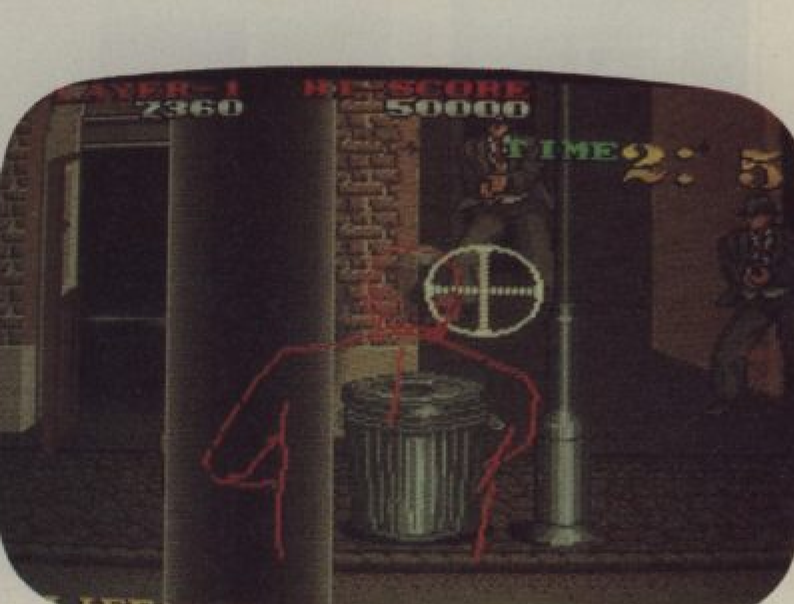
The sprites and graphics are huge and animated extremely well. It's true that the game isn't going to win any awards in the originality stakes – there are several similar games including Operation Wolf – but I personally think it's the best of the bunch.

Give it a shot.

SEAMUS ST. JOHN







ARCADE ACTION

• SUPER RANGER

Well, before I'd even wacked my 2x10p into *Super Ranger*, I was pretty sure I'd played this game before. Yep, I'm afraid it's just *Rolling Thunder* all over again, and after the past couple of months playing dull home computer versions of that little waster, I was less than keen to go through the same essentially uninspiring routine at arcade prices.

Still, what the hell, there's a review to write . . .

Suna's *Super Ranger* is just your basic "oh dear, the baddies have captured someone, we'd better go and rescue her "sort of game. In fact the title screen gives you something almost as vague as that as it's an excuse for a scenario, and then it's straight into the action.

You get to play one or two bare-chested Rambo types, twin brothers it would appear, who, armed with only a pistol each, must take on the swarms of baddies on numerous levels as they fight their way to the hostage. The game is obviously designed to be a two player animated. The first ones you come across are little blue-clad geezers who die after just one shot, but you soon get tangled up with a smattering of tougher yellow ones, green ones who lob grenades and similar at you. To start off with they aren't armed, and tend to get you by sheer weight of numbers, but it obviously gets tougher later on.

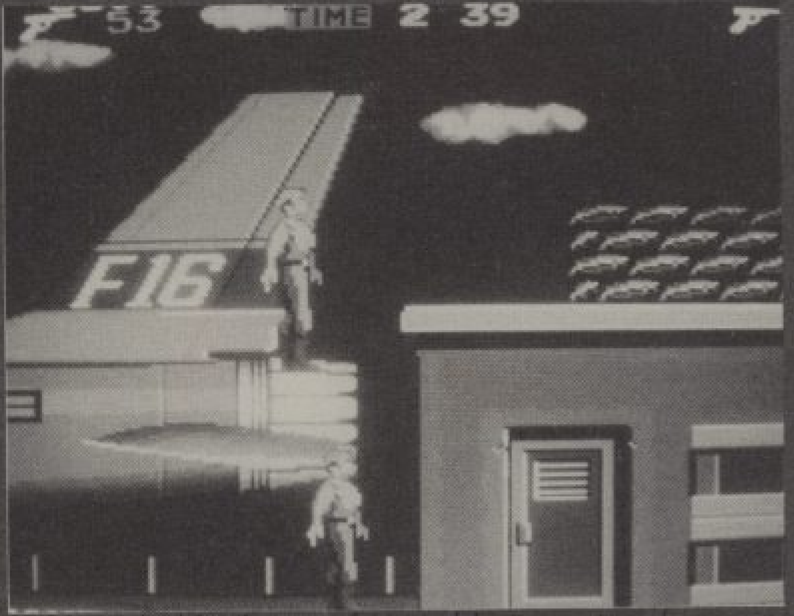
The first level is set in an air force base, with a number of F-16s to jump up on to form a slightly more interesting platform than the standard cat walk. Later you must leap over sheds, walls, and along the aforementioned catwalks that line the warehouse/garage levels. There are plenty of doors to open to duck out of the way of passing bad guys or to collect extra ammo, though the risk when you do this is that a whole load of them will congregate outside your door, making leaving a problem. There are even some which appear to warp in, making life a bit tricky.

The thing is that your control over the character you play may be fine, but it isn't particularly fast, and, as you can't fire once you've committed yourself to a big jump, there are seconds of painful vulnerability as you see bad guys gather where you are about to land.

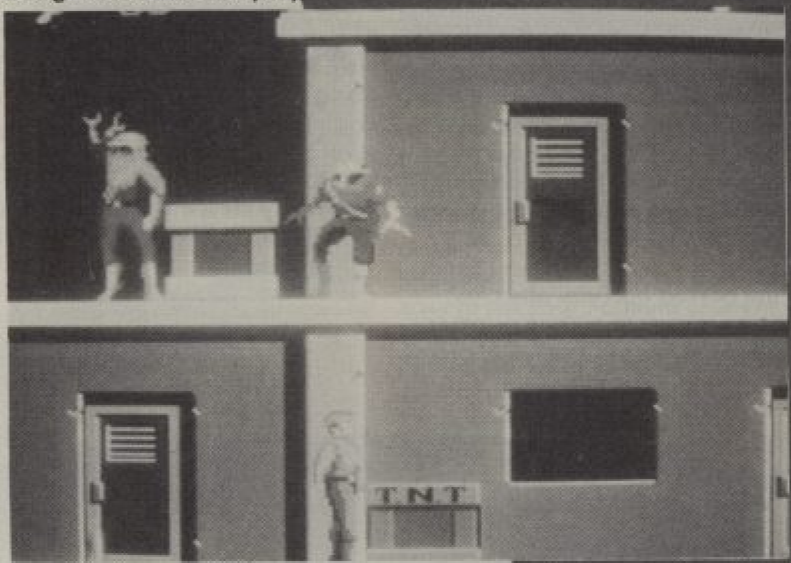
The basic danger is one of being surrounded, because once there are more than, say, four or five within close proximity of you on the screen, it will take a fair amount of sharp shooting and/or luck to get you out in one piece. This is obviously the sort of time when it would be useful to have a partner to help you out.

Basically I found the whole thing just a bit too slow, a bit monotonous, and, most importantly, just too over familiar in the gamesplay department.

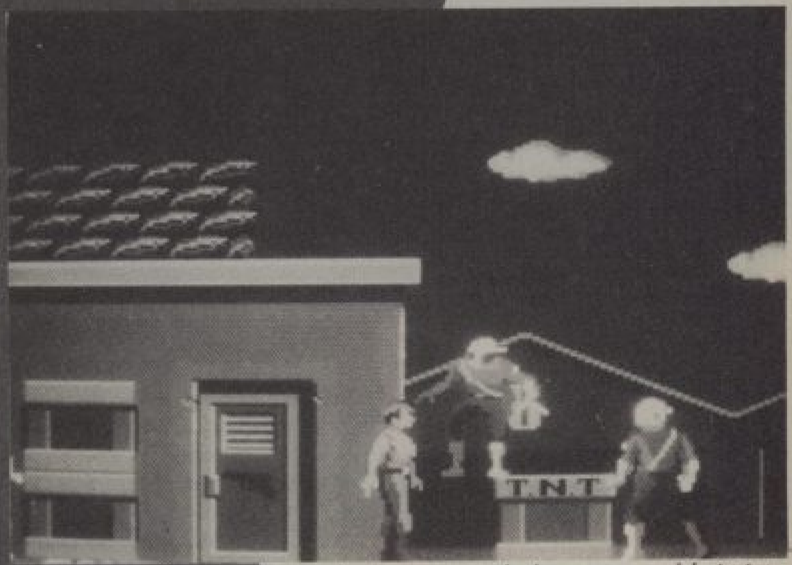
Sound was none too impressive either.



▲ Keeping both levels covered, it's much better as a two player game.



▲ Watch out for the green guys, they're harder to kill.



▲ There's a deadly danger being surrounded, so you could nip into the ammo room.

affair, and I could see that there may well be quite a lot of potential in one of you handling each bro, and taking on the baddies together. I'll watch your back if you'll watch mine sort of thing.

However, the pre-launch version I played would only operate on single player option, which was a bit annoying since I'd brought a mate along 'specially. As it is, there's not so much to it. The sprites are good 'n' large, though not pushing foreward the barriers by any means, and not too badly



▲ F-16s are fun to climb over.

However, there are a fair number of you out their who played and played *Rolling Thunder* and made it a success hell, (some people even liked it on the C64!), so it's a fair bet that if you were one of these people, you'll like this too. It is just different enough to add that extra interest to get you playing. Right, enough of that, I'm off to blow my remaining dosh (what there is of it!) on something a bit more deserving, like *Dead Angle*, or *Twin Chopper*, or even good old *Out Run* . . .

MATT BIELBY

ADVERTISEMENT INDEX

MEAN MACHINES

reviews

Mean Machine maestro Tony Takousi spots another "essential" game for the Sega, Alex Kidd, The Lost Stars and enthuses over the 3D Space Harrier.

• SUPER WONDER BOY IN MONSTER LAND

Wonder Boy must rate as one of the best arcade adventures ever and this follow up takes the original theme and extends it with role playing elements with interaction with other characters and the ability to develop your character.

Essentially it is a total mix of arcade, strategy and adventure with you trying to kill a dragon and restore peace to your country.

You move across a scrolling backdrop and have to kill the nasties along the way, they leave a gold coin in their place and you can pick it up by walking over it. There are doors which you can enter and these can given you messages or allow you to buy items for your man. There is a choice between sword, armour, shield, boots, helmet, gauntlet, wing boots, and throwable weapons in the guise of bombs, tornado and thunderflash.

You have to reach the end of the wave before your timer hits zero (indicated by little hearts) and any contact with nasties takes time off the clock. To get through to the next level you have to kill a biggie monster (standard form for Sega games, but I never get bored with it because they do it so well!), and collect the key he leaves behind.

The doors you open normally give you two choices of weapon or info and if you lack the gold to buy either it bleeps at you. There are the customary little touches like going back and killing the same nasty twice to get extra score and items and hidden bags of gold in mid-air (so get leaping).

The layouts of each land vary with some finesse needed to get around the ledges, there are (to name very few) lifts, snakes, birds, fireballs walking mushrooms and water pools to negotiate. You can kill the opposition by a well timed hack and slash of the sword.

On getting at the end of a round you are given a time bonus depending on the time on the clock and you can get a 10,000 points bonus by picking up all the extra (double kills) items in that wave.

The graphics rate as some of the best seen to date on a Sega game, the music is OK and playability is supreme although detection is generous towards the player (so who is complaining?). Again the use of colour is getting so much better with every new Sega cart I play, there is very little flicker (unlike the original *Wonder Boy)* and they seem to be pushing their game designs to new horizons, all of which makes for longterm playability and interest.

There is a world of play still in this game that I just do not have the space to tell you about, so if you enjoyed the original this is for you . . .

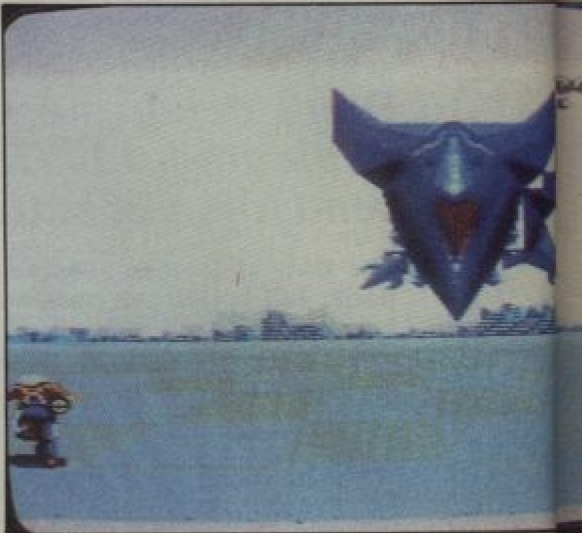


▲ *Super Wonderboy.*

• SPACE HARRIER 3D

At last! At last! I can wholeheartedly recommend going out and buying the Sega 3-D glasses!

I have just had *Space Harrier 3D* shoved into my sweaty palms (drooly, drooly) and the 3D effect works with no reservations!


▲ *3D Space Harrier.*

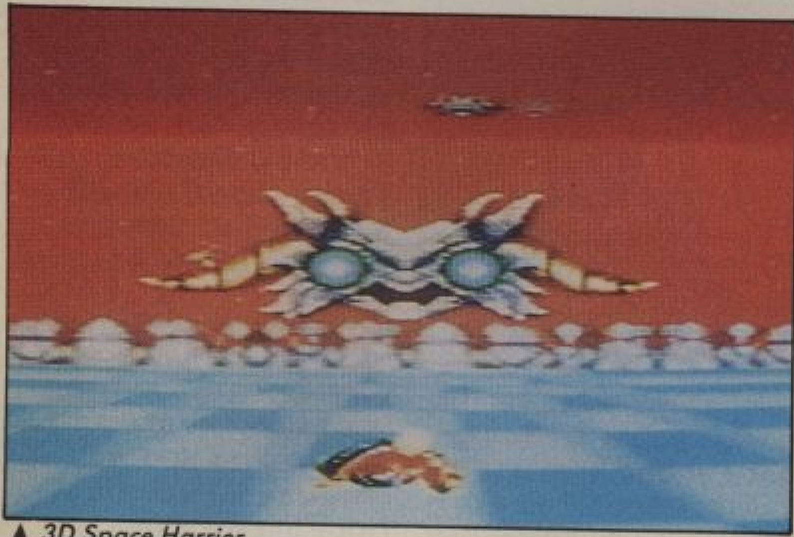
Harrier 3D is not just the original *Space Harrier* in 3D, it has different graphics, a lot more colours some really vicious play (glue that joystick to your palm, no kidding and some dragons that mean business. It is *Space Harrier Two* rather than the original in 3D.

The title screen shows your man in mid-battle and unlike *Zaxxon 3D* you cannot play the game in 2D by pressing the pause button on the title page (tough). The first level is called Platia and you get blue mushies sliding up to you, the aliens are straight out of Star Wars (Darth Varders ship) and they lob big blue spheres at you (these come at you very fast). If you are hit the customary Aaarrrgggghhh! is screamed with a more than welcome Get Ready soon after as your next life is put into play. Then come the metallic pillars, contact is fatal, zooming behind them are hunky jets which lob those big blue things at you. You have got to keep moving and be aware what is around you, as I said this is one tough cookie!

The dragon at the end is well detailed and has really rich vibrant colours, it is quite easy to kill (and so it should be after such a brute of a first wave!).

Wave two is called Moura, there is a colour flip and there is a star background. The attack pattern is NEW, big metallic spikes wander down from the sky slowly filling up the screen and you have to move out of the way.





▲ *3D Space Harrier.*

As you move up and down the horizon tilts and it is easy to collide with the spikes, you also have to zap big green butterflies, at the end of the wave large transformer type aliens rotate firing sphers galore.

I have been up to level five and you get a mixed bag of aliens, backdrops (again rich colours and strong 3D) and non-stop zapping.

It is a great game and this alone justifies buying the specs!

It is not a game for wimps or those with weak wrists. So what are you waiting for?

• ALEX KIDD: THE LOST STARS

If you own a Sega console then the essential platform games are *Zillion, Quartet, Wonderboy* and *Alex Kidd.* Sega has seen the great success of these games and produced sequels for three out of the four above.

The latest sequel to fall into my sweaty palms is *Alex Kidd: the Lost Stars.*

The original *Alex Kidd* was a great game, *The Lost Stars* (128K) is a worthy follow up with far better graphics, tunes, playability and depth.

There are 14 stages to complete with you trying to recover the Miracle Ball by getting through all 14 planets and their dangers.

When you start you are faced with an alien in the centre of the screen and the words 'find the miracle ball' are uttered (very clear digitised speech).

You run along a left to right scrolling backdrop and have to get to the exit at the end of the planet before your time runs out. You can collect fire power, extra leap strength and bonus time as you go along by touching pods which drift down the screen. You can also pick up treasure and money along the way.

Planet one has you in the country, you have to jump over a dog spitting letters out (B O W W O W!) there are also trampoline blocks to spring you higher, walking playing card, floating baby chicks, an overhead tramline you can hold on to but watch out for the trains!

Planet two has you in a big factory with metal presses, moving platforms, holes in the floor, piston blocks which try to crush you, tarzan ropes and electric bolts which give you a real charge.

Planet three is a forest, there are hanging multi-coloured platforms (some of the most colourful graphics I have ever seen in a game) and loads of nasties to avoid. Planet four has you underwater facing spitting octopus, puffy fish, low flying anchors, shell fish and an obstacle course of twisted metal strips.



▲ *The Lost Stars.*

	ALEX KIDD	HARRIER 3D	WONDERBOY
► GRAPHICS	9	9	9
► SOUND	7	8	7
► PLAYABILITY	9	8	9
► OVERALL	9	9	9

NINTENDO SEGA SCORE

► SUPER MARIO BROS	XXXXXXX	DDDDDDDDD
► ICE CLIMBER	47,870	Michael Daly
► DUCK HUNT	728,100	The Breaker
► PINBALL	314,010	James Walpole
► KUNG FU	685,300	Tony Wright
► WILD GUNMAN	1,216,000	Tony Wright
► DONKEY KONG JR	231,500	Tony Wright
► DONKEY KONG 3	384,200	Lee Davidson
► NEMESIS	767,900	Henry Fong
► GHOST AND GOBLINS	101,600	Francois Couture
► 1942	218,350	Francois Couture
► HOGANS ALLEY (C)	243,900	Francois Couture
► CLU CLU LAND	50,850	Paul Bedser
► GUMSHOE	231,000	Alex Bell
► POPEYE	87,130	Sherif Salama
► BALLOON FIGHT	251,250	Sherif Salama
► SPACE HARRIER	26,589,810	Anthony Holmes
► OUTRUN	52,204,240	David Hillhouse
► CHOPLIFTER	2,204,240	Jamie Dilasser
► HANG ON	3,181,590	Darren Newnham
► BLACK BELT	2,568,200	Gary Waddington
► SECRET COMMAND	1,319,750	Massimo Torlini
► TRANSBOT	1,340,760	D. Gibson
► QUARTET	642,450	Mark Frazer
► PRO-WRESTLER	853,400	Martin Horne
► ASTRO WARRIOR	522,500	Simon Fields
► FANTASY ZONE	3,954,800	S. Haldane
► NINJA	1,116,250	Brett Colman
► WONDERBOY	780,920	Gareth Edwards
► ALEX KIDD	1,000,200	Keith Lynch
► SAFARI HUNT	1,320,300	Chris Shaw
► TRAPSHOOTING	254,200	Chris Shaw
► MISSILE DEFENSE 3D	246,000	Chris Shaw
► MY HERO	636,900	Mike Reid
► ACTION FIGHTER	243,490	John Cowlin
► SHOOTING GALLERY	44,300	Nicholas Brown
► PIT POT	168,500	Simon Fields
► GHOST HOUSE	575,010	Alan Clarke
► KUNG FU KID	703,400	Jonathan Stevens
► BANK PANIC	526,650	Ian Green
► TEDDY BOY	98,010	Ian Green

Come on, I want to see high scores for the following: *Afterburner, Zaxxon 3D, Fantasy Zone 2, Global Defense, Gangster Town.*

The same goes for all you Nintendo owners, what about the games: *Wrecking Crew, Mach Rider, Marios Bros.*

Mailbag

If you've got something to say about the world of computer games, don't keep it to yourself. Write to Mailbag, Computer + Video Games, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

• I don't usually write to magazines but I am compelled to write to yours. Last month I recall we had all this hype about more reviews and better marking. This is totally untrue; last month you reviewed 34 games. This month 24 were reviewed and they were centred around the Atari ST. Why don't you call the magazine Atari ST and Video Games?

I'm glad your tips section is being updated; for months it was total drivel. The arcade section is good, but the layout's all wrong. Keep up the front covers, they are great.

I also get Amstrad Action, which is much better than *C+VG,* I'm afraid to say; its review system is much better than yours — they mark in percentages, which is a better way of marking the game they are reviewing.

Richard Gregory,
Bolton.

Editor's reply: It might sound like an obvious thing to say, but we can only review what games come out each month. Some months there are more than others! Yes, we'll keep up the front covers — otherwise the magazine would start on page 3 . . .

• Currently, Amstrad owners are having a rather bad patch, only reedemed by *Gryzor* and *Thundercats*. Just recently, an awesome run of coin-ops have been converted; *Gryzor, Outrun, SideArms, Gauntlet II, Bionic Commandos,* etc.

Of these, the only ones to grace the Amstrad are *Gryzor* and *Gauntlet II*. Going back to the others, a lot of the conversion work is done by Probe Software; *Outrun, SideArms, Rygar, Slap Fight* and *Arkanoid*. *Arkanoid's* great, but the rest, on the Amstrad at least, are miles below standard.

Companies like Elite, Palace and Imagine squeeze things out of the *CPC* I didn't believe were possible. Games like *Ikari Warriors* and *Ghosts 'n' Goblins, Barbarian* and *Rimrunner, Renegade* and *Gryzor* — but it seems that there are some programming teams, like Probe, who can't be bothered to take time over a game to get it right. They set out just to make good Commodore 64 games, and to hell with the rest of us. Don't get me wrong, *SideArms* etc are good games, but hopeless conversions. I don't think for a moment that an Amstrad's capabilities match that of a Commodore, but if we can get *Ikari* and *Renegade* out of the CPC, why not *OutRun?* Why is it that certain games are so rushed?

Why do some companies just wait until a game's finished, however good or bad, then just put it out? Please tell me if Probe are converting *Bionic Commandos;* I've already spent £50 on Probe games, but only got £10 of pleasure from them, and I don't intend to waste any more.

Andrew Amstradowner,
Surrey.

Editor's reply: I suppose software houses do it because they're only human, and the answer is to read the reviews before you fork out your cash!

• Over here in New Zealand *C+VG* gets the red carpet for a very impressive magazine. Take November's issue, crammed with pages of all variety. And December's offering was nothing short of a fab. Planet of Doom was great and I'm looking forward to more adventures.

One thing has me a little confused though and that's is month's. It shocked me when I picked up the latest copy of *C+VG* and it read December and the month was April. Has someone sabotaged the *C+VG* calendar? Is it the same people who kidnapped Melissa R?

Anyway I thought December's ish was hot especially the competitions. Which reminds me. Is it possible for a person like me (and many others) who live so far away to enter your competitions? If so could you extend the closing date so our entries can reach the *C+VG* office? Hope this scroll reaches you in time for your January issue.

B. Struan,
New Zealand.

Editor's reply: It's always great to hear from readers down under. I guess the problem of your issue dates is due to a combination of factors. Firstly we work so far in advance and, secondly, New Zealand. The December issue of *C+VG*, which is published during November in the UK, turns up in NZ in April. We can't really extend competitions dates by four months or so. I guess the answer is special competitions for overseas readers.

• Dear Sir or Madam (or any creature of the demon, giant, cat, robot or any other alien race that might happen to read the *C+VG* mail (no offence!).

There are two reasons for me writing this letter, but I'll just waffle a bit in between. Every month I read the adventure section of every mag on the shelf, and then I buy *C+VG* (and occasionally CU). Then I tear out the poster and hang it on the wall (I'll have to stick them to the

ceiling soon) and then I read the rest of the mag.

One thing drives me mad. When I see all these ads for all these games of a lifetime, but there is no Amiga version. How am I supposed to get all these games of a lifetime when there isn't a version for my computer? Why the *&/%$ D? are these petty 8-bit micros and the even pettier ST getting conversions from coin-ops, but the only micro which has a chance of being better than the coin-op is left out? An obvious example is *Garrison,* which at least equals the *Gauntlet* arcade, although I miss the speech, and the four player option.

Maybe the coin-op companies are afraid that when people see the amazing quality of the Amiga version, they won't play the coin-op any more, but will all go and buy an Amiga?

Enough of that. Now I can get to my two reasons for writing this letter. Firstly, I want to know what happened to Tim Metcalfe (not that the new Ed doesn't fill the gap). Was he sacked or did he resign, or did he just take his Conan wig and six-foot wooden sword and disappear into the sunset in search of Melissa Ravenflame?

Secondly, I wish to purchase old copies of *C+VG,* January, February and March issues of 1986, to be exact. Somehow, these issues never made it to my home country, Iceland, and my good friend there wants them to complete his collection. (Mine only starts with November '87, his somewhere in '85).

DJ,
Edinburgh.

Editor's reply: It's a shame about Amiga conversions, DJ, but things are picking up. The basic rule for software houses appears to be they produce games for the machines which are in the majority. Yes, Tim has gone off in search of Melissa. He's just come back from yomping around New Zealand. But Miss R wasn't there. For Back Issues of *C+VG,* you must write to Computer+Video Games, EMAP Frontline, 1 Lincoln Court, Lincoln Road, Peterborough PE1 2RP.

● I think there should be a separate part of *C+VG* dedicated to programmers (or those willing to learn). As you may have noticed, no other magazine on the market gives Spectrum listings or tips. Instead of having one small book of programs every four months or so, I believe you could boost your sales by having a monthly supplementary black and white, pull out section with hints and tips on basic and M/C programming.

Struan Robertson, Oban.

Editor's reply: I'm afraid we've given up publishing listings for nearly a year now. I can't remember any of our readers protesting. However, if enough people write in saying they'd like listings or programming hints we'll think about it.

● I am the lucky owner of a fab MSX. Why, I want to know, do the software companies not take much notice of this machine. In my opinion, and a few other people I know who own Commodore 64's, the MSX has better sound and graphics then the 64, so software manufactures takes not of this letter and check out this macho machine.

Enough of that, now the *C+VG* review. I like your mag and especially the reviews, but now a complaint.

In your Jan '88 issue you said next month there would be a special on the MSX.

Saturday morning approaches, I leave my house and jump on my bike, cycle five miles into the nearest town to collect the magazines. I leave the bike at the door of the shops and run inside, leave my money on the counter and grab the magazine.

I race home on my bike to read your magazine. I open the index to find out which page the MSX special is on. Shock, Horror. I begin to pull my hair out No special.

It's okay to make a few mistakes like articles on wrong pages, upside down pictures but this is the last staw. No article at all. Please explain why.

Finally *C+VG* is quite brilliant but please try not to make a mistake like this again, in the next issue please include the MSX special.

Dudley Colley,
Colvicklaw, Ireland.

Editor's reply: Sorry about the disappearance of the MSX feature. The truth is that we changed our minds at the last moment and decided we couldn't afford to give what is a minority machine, that amount of coverage. That's the truth, Dudley.

● I buy both *C+VG* and Commodore User. I think your mag is much better. The reviewing system is much fairer. CU is very stingy with it's marks. I think *C+VG* is far better in its layout with all the good games at the front and *C+VG* is far more varied in the games and machines reviewed.

One gripe, though. To enter one of your competitions you have to be able to draw well. It's not right. You don't have to be a great artist to like games or to want an Amiga or ST. Why don't you have more competitions centred on general knowledge? Can we have more free games, giant posters etc as well.

Oh yes, and which moron writes the replies to you letters. Tell me and I'll come and bash him for you. Print this letter or else, Eugene.

AM, Bolton, Lancs.

Editor's reply: Sorry about calling you, AM but quite honestly we can't make out your signature. You're wrong about the competitions. Most are NOT art ones. And you don't have to be a brilliant artist. Prizes have often gone to people who have good ideas rather than technical talent. Guess who writes the "Editor's replies". That's a bit of a clue isn't it? But, of course, it may not be true. I may not be the editor. I may not even be a he or she. Perhaps I'm an it. You'll never know. HA!

Mailbag

Out To Lunch

It's never easy being an investigative reporter – boozy breakfast meetings, boozy lunch times and heavy sessions in the pub in the evening take their toll on even the best of journalists. But John Minson's liver is made of sterner stuff and thim month he starts his new column on what is and isn't happening in the software industry . . . in between drinks, of course.

May – and once again it's time to spring-clean my software shelves. Which is when the terrible realisation hit me. Ninety percent of the programs I've collected over the past twelve months don't deserve to be loaded into anything more sophisticated than a cardboard box, to earn a few quid for Oxfam – which is the most useful thing they'll ever achieve!

I can remember, back in the mists of computing pre-history (ie five years ago), when we used to marvel at every new release. **Space Invaders** flew in from planet **Psion** and we gasped. How we laughed when Horace went skiing.

So what if they look creaky nowadays?

But there was another factor, which is probably even more important – new games were fairly rare occurences in those days!

Recently two new publishers have joined the throng of companies spewing out product. If **Exocet** hasn't torpedoed itself with its singularily tacky name it may launch (sic) some classics. It's aim (sic) is to produce at least six to eight quality titles a year. I'll hang fire (sick) until I've seen it, but the main selling point of its first ST release, **Foundations Waste,** appears to be nice graphics rather than innovative gameplay.

Mandarin also promises to put quality before quantity, using respected progrmmers such as Level 9, though the reappearance of Bubble Bus's perennial arcade adventure, **Starquake,** hardly bodes well for originality.

Products from these two new players will flood into an already saturated marketplace. More labels, titles, versions, units. In 1988 success is judged more by sales than the ability to thrill. The computer software industry is suffering from diarrhoea and, not surprisingly, much of what pours out is far from fragrant.

How can it be? If you're pledged to produce so many games a year, building up to a massive dump at Christmas, in the hope that you'll drown the competition in noxious brown waves, how can you afford to develop a game which does something totally new?

There's little enough time to rush out a clone – and you do it at double speed, to beat the official version.

According to software agent *Jacqui Lyons,* who represents some of the country's best authors, it can take two and half man (or woman – this is a non-sexist column) years to write a big game. But how many software houses can afford to



▲ *Matt Bielby out to lunch with his mum!*

wait that long. So the limited number of programmers are pushed flat-out to produce, produce . . . rather like battery hens.

grind out the standard bill of fare. So you stick to the tried and trusted route, looking for inspiration in the arcades. Ignore the fact that the full-size machine had 16 bit graphics and a moving seat. You'll do it in mono on the Spectrum and the punters can saw half-an-inch off their chair legs to get the motion.

Never miss out on a big licence. **1941, 1942,** et al wowed them at coin-ops so get your name down early for 1946. It's only later you realise the war ended in '45.

Okay – so what if you do miss out on the license to **WEC Le Mans,** for example? After all, only one company can get the chequered flag. Simple! You

Then, if all the competent coders are tied up, you resort to those who are less dependable, in the knowledge that the odd duff game will be quickly forgotten in the flood.

By now the poor old software houses should be running for cover if the words of an angry journalist meant anything. Either that or they'd be lobbing the odd shell back in my direction. But – and here's the real shocker – it's not entirely their fault! No – it's yours and mine!

Well, okay – not exactly yours and mine but . . . err . theirs! And who are they? Well, 'they' are the people who don't buy the clever games, the different games, the innovative games that make people of taste and discernment (ahh – now that is you and me) go 'Hey! Wow! Oooh-oooh-oooh!' when we see them.

'They' are the people who carry on buying the dross even though, after so many dodgy tie-ins, they should smell the cynical stench of quick-buck exploitation immediately. This is not a perfect world and if you let people rip you off, they won't hesitate to do so!

Eventually though, the world will wise up. They'll say, 'Enough! I don't want another scrolling shoot 'em up!' And they'll stop buying the dross. Which will sink the volume publishers unless they can adjust to quality might quickly. Now, as we all know, nature abhors a vacuum, and into this black hole or bankruptcy will flow . . . the Americans!

I'm not saying that Stateside software is better than British. It's not even as good much of the time. But look at the best of it and you realise that the spirit of experimentation is not dead. Whether it's something as quirky as **Little Computer People,** as clever as **Maniac Mansion,** or even a superlative card playing program like **Card Sharks,** which caters for would-be poker and blackjack pros like never before, there's a feeing of freshness about it.

It's not that we've not got the talent to produce programs of this quality – it's just that we use it the wrong way! It's either tied-up in the low-end of the market or it does what music supremo **Rob Hubbard** did – goes over to work in the States with EA.

So if we want to bring back the magic to British software, all join in, on the count of three . . . 'We don't need another hero . . .' At least not one who's made up of pixels!



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Screen shots from ATARI ST version.

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